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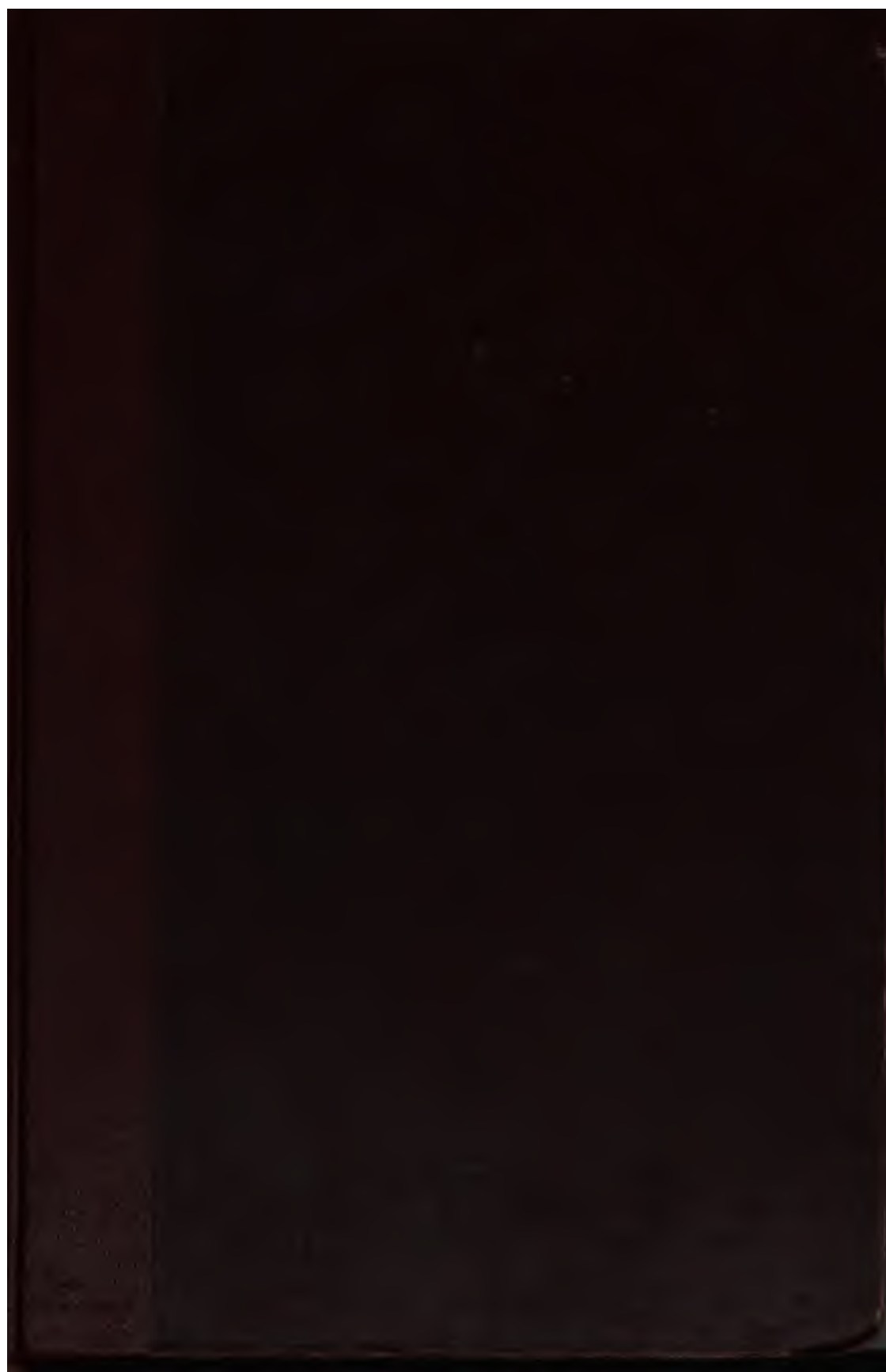
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STUDIES IN DANTE

SECOND SERIES

MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS

BY

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THE DEDICATION
OF THIS WORK
WAS KINDLY ACCEPTED IN THE LAST YEAR
OF HIS LIFE
BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
W. E. GLADSTONE
AN ACCOMPLISHED ITALIAN SCHOLAR
AND ONE OF THE MOST ENTHUSIASTIC ADMIRERS
OF DANTE THAT OUR COUNTRY HAS
PRODUCED

PREFACE

THE relation of the present collection of *Studies* to that which was published three years ago is that of another Series rather than that of a Second Volume. I have endeavoured to make them as far as possible independent of one another, since some of the various subjects here treated of may (it is hoped) have an interest for many who would not care to purchase a volume entirely devoted to a subject so special and technical as 'the use by Dante of Scriptural and Classical authors.' I do not think the former volume will ever be found necessary merely for the intelligibility of anything that occurs in this, though I have often referred to the earlier series for the fuller discussion or illustration of points which arise here. I trust therefore that each series will prove to be sufficiently complete in itself to be used as an entirely separate work.

I believe I have personally verified every quotation made whenever it was possible. Otherwise the authority from whom it was derived is given. But one cannot always acknowledge the source to which the first suggestion of a quotation or reference may have been due. It is often impossible to trace this after some lapse of time, since in notes made for private use this is not generally recorded. My endeavour, however, has been to acknowledge this also whenever I have been able to do so.

The variety of subjects has often compelled me to venture

on topics on which I am bound to speak or write with much diffidence. But I have never failed to receive ungrudging assistance from friends, and even from strangers, from whom I have sought special information. I wish to tender my sincere thanks to all who have thus kindly helped me.

On one of such subjects, arising chiefly in the first Essay, I would add a few words. I earnestly hope that I have not misrepresented in any way the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. I have taken every precaution to avoid doing so by consulting both original authorities and also several personal friends, members of that branch of the Church, who have rendered me most kind and generous help. If I have still fallen into error, it has been quite unintentional, and I wish to express my sincere regret by anticipation, if such should be found to be the case.

My best thanks are again due to the kindness of my friend and distinguished fellow-student, Mr. Paget Toynbee. He has once more very kindly helped me to correct the proof-sheets, and has besides generously contributed additional information and illustrations throughout the whole work, which have added greatly to any value that it may possess. I have also to thank very heartily my friend and colleague, the Rev. H. L. Wild, Vice-Principal of St. Edmund Hall, who, though not specially interested in the study of Dante, has carefully gone through the proof-sheets, and rendered me valuable aid in the correction of many errors and blemishes in style and diction,

‘quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.’

I have further to acknowledge the courtesy of the Editors and Proprietors of the *Edinburgh* and *Fortnightly Reviews*, in permitting me to reprint such of these Essays as have already appeared in those *Reviews*.

I once more cordially thank the Delegates of the Clarendon Press for their liberality in undertaking the publication of this Second Series of *Studies*. And I would not omit to recognize the care and accuracy with which the work, both of printing and 'reading,' has been carried out at the Press, and the uniform kindness and courtesy which I have received from every one connected with it.

The references to the lines in the Prose works of Dante are given, as before, to those in the margin of the Oxford Dante, 1894.

I cannot conclude without expressing my deep regret that I am deprived of the privilege of submitting this work to the judgement of the distinguished scholar, to whose memory, in virtue of his promised acceptance of its dedication, I have the honour to inscribe it. He expressed much interest in some of the subjects treated of, and kindly helped me more than once with information and advice.

E. MOORE.

ST. EDMUND HALL, OXFORD:
Easter, 1899.

CONTENTS

	PAGES
EDITIONS OF AUTHORS QUOTED	xiii-xvi
I. DANTE AS A RELIGIOUS TEACHER, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO CATHOLIC DOCTRINE. . . .	1-78
II. BEATRICE	79-151
III. THE CLASSIFICATION OF SINS IN THE 'INFERNO' AND 'PURGATORIO'	152-209
IV. DANTE'S PERSONAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS DIFFERENT KINDS OF SIN	210-245
V. UNITY AND SYMMETRY OF DESIGN IN THE 'PURGA- TORIO'	246-268
VI. DANTE AND SICILY	269-302
VII. THE GENUINENESS OF THE 'QUAESTIO DE AQUA ET TERRA'	303-374
CORRIGENDA AND ADDENDA TO FIRST SERIES OF <i>STUDIES</i>	375-378
INDEX	379-386

CONTENTS

	PAGES
EDITIONS OF AUTHORS QUOTED	xiii-xvi
I. DANTE AS A RELIGIOUS TEACHER, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO CATHOLIC DOCTRINE	1-78
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VI. DANTE AND SICILY	269-302
VII. THE GENUINENESS OF THE 'QUAESTIO DE AQUA ET TERRA'	303-374
CORRIGENDA AND ADDENDA TO FIRST SERIES OF <i>STUDIES</i>	375-378
INDEX	379-386

xiv EDITIONS OF BOOKS AND AUTHORS QUOTED

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ERRATA

- Page 15, l. 3 from bottom (notes), for *Trésors* read *Trésor*
 „ 47, l. 23, Perrone is wrongly described as 'Cardinal'
 „ 71, l. 4 from bottom (notes), for iii. read viii.
 „ 116, and also 130, for *Délécluze* read *Delécluze*

STUDIES IN DANTE

ERRATUM

In the list of Sins in the *Inferno* on p. 162, 'Avarice' should come before 'Anger.'

The same transposition should be made on p. 173, l. 14.

The argument based upon the erroneous order on p. 174, ll. 24, 25, should be cancelled.

Studies in Dante, II.

his theological position as a sincere and orthodox Catholic. This is a subject on which the most erroneous views have prevailed, owing to the omission to note the vital distinction between denouncing abuses in discipline or practice, and impugning errors of doctrine.

Probably no pre-eminently great writer has ever been the subject of such utterly diverse judgements as Dante, and this

¹ Reprinted (with considerable additions and alterations) from the *Fortnightly Review*, August and December, 1897.

STUDIES IN DANTE



I. DANTE AS A RELIGIOUS TEACHER, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO CATHOLIC DOCTRINE¹

THE object of this essay is mainly twofold. First, to point out the extraordinary variety of men and minds that nowadays recognize in Dante a religious or moral teacher, and to contrast this phenomenon with the equally extraordinary incapacity to appreciate him prevalent in the last century, and even later. Secondly (and chiefly), to vindicate his theological position as a sincere and orthodox Catholic. This is a subject on which the most erroneous views have prevailed, owing to the omission to note the vital distinction between denouncing abuses in discipline or practice, and impugning errors of doctrine.

Probably no pre-eminently great writer has ever been the subject of such utterly diverse judgements as Dante, and this

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from the literary and artistic no less than from the theological side. The voice of adverse criticism seems now completely hushed, and the chorus of eager and often indiscriminating admiration holds the field. We can scarcely, therefore, conceive the possibility of Dante being the object of such vehement, not to say ferocious, condemnation as we read in utter astonishment in the pages of such eminent writers and critics as Voltaire, Lamartine, Goethe, Goldsmith, Lord Chesterfield, Horace Walpole, Leigh Hunt, and Walter Savage Landor¹. A few samples of these strange criticisms may not be without interest. This is the judgement of Oliver Goldsmith: 'Dante, the poet of Italy, who wrote in the thirteenth century . . . addressed a barbarous people in a method suited to their apprehensions. . . . He shows a strange mixture of good sense and absurdity. The truth is, he owes most of his reputation to the obscurity of the times in which he lived. As in the land of Benin a man may pass as a prodigy of parts who can read, so in an age of barbarity a small degree of excellence secures success!' Lamartine described Dante as 'un poète personnel et local.' Voltaire says of Dante: 'His reputation will go on increasing, because scarcely anybody reads him. . . . There are still found among us, and in the eighteenth century, people who strive to admire imaginations so stupidly extravagant and barbarous. The *Divina Commedia* is an odd poem . . . in which the author rose in parts above the bad taste of his age and his subject.' Considering that Voltaire described Shakespeare as 'sauvage ivre, sans la moindre étincelle de bon goût, et sans la moindre connaissance des règles'² (1), and that he preferred

¹ In earlier times we should note the bitter attacks of Cecco d' Ascoli (burnt in 1327) prompted by personal hatred; and also the singular tirade of Machiavelli in his *Discorso sulla Lingua di Dante*, &c., in which he accuses Dante of barbarisms and coarseness in his language, specially denying that it is pure Florentine. Even Cino da Pistoia (in reference to whom Dante describes himself regularly in the *De Vulg. Eloq.* as 'amicus ejus') ventures upon a little unfavourable though not malignant criticism. See Sonnets xi and xii in Rossetti, *Dante and his Circle*.

² This last piece of criticism is delightfully French. As a characteristic specimen of captious and flippant criticism, we may quote his comment on *Inf.* i. 68, where Virgil says 'li parenti miei furon Lombardi':—'C'est pré-

Ariosto to the *Odyssey* and *Tasso* to the *Iliad*¹, his censure is perhaps to be more valued than his praise. Lord Chesterfield writes to his son (Feb. 8, 1750): 'Whatever author is obscure and difficult in his own language certainly does not think clearly. [A statement palpably and absurdly untrue]... Though I formerly knew Italian well, I could never understand Dante, for which reason I had done with him, fully convinced that he was not worth the pains necessary to understand him.' Walpole declares: 'Dante was extravagant, absurd, disgusting: in short, a Methodist parson in Bedlam.' Goethe complained that 'the *Inferno* was abominable, the *Purgatorio* dubious, and the *Paradiso* tiresome².' As to Landor, some of his abuse is almost too coarse to quote. Two or three sentences may suffice. 'I cannot but consider the *Inferno* as the most immoral and impious book that ever was written.' Again: 'Dante (one must whisper it) is the great master of the disgusting.' Once more: 'The Marriage of S. Francis and Poverty is insipid and spiritless³.' What

cisément comme si Homère disait qu'il était né Turc! Surely we may fairly apply to such a writer the scornful protest of Tennyson:—

'Vex not thou the poet's mind
With thy shallow wit.
Vex not thou the poet's mind,
For thou canst not fathom it.'

A similar piece of pedantic criticism may be seen in an Essay or rather tirade of Castravilla (c. 1570), who showed, by a series of mechanical syllogisms verbally based upon rules and dicta of Aristotle's *Poetics*, that the *Commedia* of Dante could not be called a Poem at all, heroic or dramatic, since it wants unity; it is 'episodic'; it does not exhibit in its plot μέγεθος, περιπέτεια, ἀναγνώρισις, δέσις, or λύσις; ἡθὴ and λέξις are equally censurable; nor are there any elements of 'pity' or 'fear'!

¹ In his *Essai sur Mœurs*, quoted by Sainte-Beuve in his *Étude sur Virgile*, pp. 306, 307.

² From E. Scherer, *Études critiques de Littérature*. Milton fared little better at Goethe's hands, for he stigmatized the subject of *Paradise Lost* as 'abominable, with a fair outside, but rotten inwardly' (from Pattison's *Essay on Milton*).

³ See *Pentameron*, pp. 15, 44, 45, 49, 52, &c. (ed. London, 1837). On p. 165 we read: 'S. Paul (*sic*) in his passion picks up and flourishes some very filthy words.' [He probably is thinking of S. *Peter* in *Rev. xxvii*!] The *Pentameron* is a series of imaginary dialogues between Boccaccio and Petrarch (abounding in passages of great beauty it should be said, in which Landor puts into the mouth of the latter the most venomous criticisms of Dante. Surely such

an incredible description of one of the most exquisite episodes in the *Paradiso*! Again, this is the judgement of Warton, once Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, in his elaborate *History of English Poetry* in four volumes. In reference to Dante's choice of a subject he exclaims: 'But why should we attempt to excuse any absurdity in the writings or manners of the Middle Ages? . . . But the grossest improprieties of this poem discover an originality of invention, and its absurdities often border on sublimity' (vol. iv. p. 65). After criticizing severely one or two passages, Warton, by way of apology for Dante, kindly adds: 'It is not to be supposed that a man of strong sense and genius . . . would have indulged himself in these disgusting fooleries (!) had he been at all apprehensive that his readers would have been disgusted.' In reference to the exquisite passage in *Purg.* i. ('Dolce color,' &c.) he goes so far as to admit that 'Dante describes *not disagreeably* (!) the first region which he traverses on leaving Hell' (p. 74)¹. Finally, one of the

'conversation' in Petrarch's mouth is in the highest degree 'imaginary.' It is only fair to add that Landor fully recognizes the supreme beauty of some episodes, such as that of Francesca and Paolo. Landor spoke disparagingly of Spenser, Wordsworth, and Goethe (who 'flavoured his poetry with the corrugated spicery of metaphysics'), but he admired Milton, Southey and (especially) Shelley (see Dowden's *Studies in Literature*, pp. 183, 188). Most of the writers quoted in the text were probably acquainted only with the *Inferno*, and their knowledge even of that was most likely limited to a few inelegant extracts. Their criticisms do but repeat the method recommended to Balaam by Balak, 'Come unto a place whence . . . thou shalt see but the utmost part of them and shalt not see them all, and curse me them from thence.'

¹ As a combined illustration of the taste of both Voltaire and Mr. Warton, we may quote a few lines of a grotesque parody, misnamed a 'translation,' by Voltaire of the splendid scene in *Inf.* xxvii. (referred to later, p. 73). Incredible though it seem, ll. 122 *seqq.* appear in this form:—

('Le damné parle ainsi')—'grâce à l'Italie
Le Diable sait la Théologie.
Il dit et rit. 'Je ne répliquai rien
A Belzebub, il raisonna trop bien.'
Lors il m'empoigne, et d'un bras roide et ferme
Il appliqua sur ma triste épiderme
Vingt coups de fouet, dont bien fort il me cuit :
Que Dieu le rend à Boniface huit'!!

The comment of the Oxford Professor of Poetry upon this is: 'Dante thus translated would have had many more readers than at present.' This possibly

most distinguished and learned professors whom the writer has known during a residence of many years at Oxford could seldom mention Dante's great work without characterizing it by an adjective which occurs only once in the Bible, and then as an epithet of 'heresies.'

The fate of Dante in this respect is, however, in some sense that which befalls all the greatest of writers, and especially poets. It is only perhaps exceptional in proportion to his exceptional greatness, and the exceptional importance of the message which he has to deliver. The greatest poets, I say, have their epochs of varying popularity in successive generations of men. They have periods of peculiar lustre alternating with periods of comparative obscurity. This depends on the training, tastes, interests, and mental attitude generally of each generation. As the most beautiful music produces no effect on those who have 'no ear,' so in the case of poetry, however lofty or earnest, there are times when for its message men have 'no ears to hear.' These cycles may be long or short; they may last but a few years (as in the case of Wordsworth or Tennyson), or they may extend over generations, as with Dante during the greater part of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But the poet's message, if it ever had in it the life of Truth, cannot die; its vitality is only suspended, and whenever it again finds a congenial soil, as it surely will, like the seeds that have lain buried for centuries in the ashes of Pompeii or the sepulchres of Egypt, it will burst forth into life again. And so it has been with Dante in the extraordinary revival in the study of his works which we have witnessed in this nineteenth century. For that which in the present day most moves our wonder is the astonishing diversity in the minds, the creeds, the interests of those who vie with one another in extolling Dante as the exponent or precursor of their own peculiar teaching. Confining ourselves, as our subject requires, to religious questions, or such social questions as lie on the fringe of religion in its practical aspects, we find Dante claimed by Roman Catholics as 'the

is grimly true, as it might be of any one who would condescend to write similar trash.

Catholic Virgil,' or as 'the poetic Aquinas.' Several commentaries have been written to explain away anything in Dante that would jar on Catholic or orthodox feeling. Distinguished Roman theologians—most notably Cardinal Bellarmine¹—have written in defence of Dante's orthodoxy, protesting, and, as we shall endeavour to show, perfectly justly, against his appropriation by Lutheran or Calvinistic Reformers. A modern Roman theologian is even bold to say that, were all the libraries in the world destroyed, and the Holy Scriptures with them, the whole Catholic system of doctrine and morals might almost be reconstructed from

¹ The charges against Dante with which Bellarmine deals fall under five heads.

1. That he denounces the vices of Popes and Clergy.

Ans. After all he only censures six Popes 'ex tam ingenti numero.' This is rather a lame reply, and Bellarmine would have done better to confine himself to pleading *Matt. xxiii. 2*, which he quotes later.

2. That he applies the Apocalyptic prophecy of Babylon to the Papacy in *Inf. xix*.

Ans. Bellarmine lays stress on l. 101, where Dante says that his language is restrained by

'La riverenza delle somme chiavi.'

Having regard to what he does venture to say in this Canto, it is hardly fair to assert, 'ne in Inferno quidem Dantes audet contumeliose eum alloqui'!

3. That he speaks against the Sacrifice of the Mass.

This allegation turns on an absurd misinterpretation of the line, *Purg. xxxiii. 36*—

'Che vendetta di Dio non teme suppe'

where 'suppe' is said to mean 'panem vino maceratum'!

This of course is easily disposed of.

4. That he prophesied of Luther.

This again depends on a very easily refuted explanation of the famous prophecy in *Purg. xxxiii. 43* of the 'Cinquecento dieci e cinque' which is noticed again on the next page.

5. That he denounces Indulgences.

The passage referred to is chiefly *Par. xxix. 118 seqq.*—

'Ma tale uccel nel becchetto s'annida,' &c.

To this Bellarmine replies that ll. 122 and 126 show that Dante is dealing with impostors, who offer such privileges without authority.

After this, Bellarmine carries the war into the enemy's country, and collects a series of passages in which Dante speaks with respect or reverence of sundry offices and doctrines of the Church.

This is a summary of parts of an Appendix to his *De Summo Pontifice*, in which Appendix Bellarmine is dealing with an anonymous work, entitled *Avviso piacevole dato alla bella Italia*. (See especially chapters xiv. to xix. pp. 486-490 of vol. ii, ed. Ven. 1721.)

the *Divina Commedia*¹. Several Popes (including Paul III, Pius IV, Clement XII, and Pius VII) have accepted the dedication of editions of the *Divina Commedia*, or of commentaries upon it². Nor did the Inquisition ever dare (with one local and insignificant exception³, and this involving only the excision of three brief passages) to condemn a work containing so many scathing and by no means carefully guarded denunciations of abuses in the Church and its leaders.

On the other hand, Dante has been claimed by Protestants as 'a Reformer before the Reformation,' and that as early as 1556, as well as by numerous writers since down to our own day. Some have been so far carried away by this conviction as to imagine that by a sort of inspired clairvoyance⁴ Dante 'prophesied' of Luther in his anticipation of the great deliverer under the celebrated symbol of the 'Veltró' or Hound (*Inf.* i. 101), because, forsooth, the words 'Veltró' and 'Lutero' are composed of the same letters⁵! Not only so,

¹ Hettinger, p. 234.

² See Lyell, *Dello Spirito Cattolico di Dante*, &c., p. 43.

³ The exception referred to in the text is the Spanish Index (Madrid, 1612), which ordained that in all future editions the following passages should be omitted:—(1) *Inf.* xi. 8, 9; (2) *Inf.* xix. 106-117; (3) *Par.* ix. 136-142. The censure of the Inquisition was specially directed against the edition of 1596, with the Commentaries of Landino and Vellutello. There were twenty-two passages in these Commentaries specifically condemned besides the three in the text itself. The Decree may be read *in extenso* in the *Index Librorum prohibitorum et expurgatorum* (Genevac, 1619), pp. 321-3. In 1878, I saw some beautiful MSS. in the Royal Library at Madrid, which were defaced by the erasure of the three condemned passages. Also one (Batines, 367) in the Barberini Library at Rome. But (unlike the case of the *De Monarchia*) no general condemnation of the Church has been passed on the *Divina Commedia*, or any portions of it. As Professor Caird has well pointed out—'From the first the Catholic Church recognized that the attacks of Dante were the wounds of a friend, and that it would be absurd to put in the Index a poem which was the most eloquent of all expressions of its own essential ideas.' (*Essays*, i. p. 3.)

⁴ Another absurd instance of the attribution of this kind of 'prophetic' foresight to Dante occurs in reference to *Purg.* xi. 98-9 ('e forse è nato Chi l'uno e l'altro cacerà di nido'). Here Vellutello (an enthusiast for Petrarch) makes the preposterous suggestion that Dante 'mosso da profetico spirito' is referring to Petrarch, born 1304, and consequently only seventeen in the year of Dante's death. Mr. Butler states (*Purg.* p. 431) that some commentators have even interpreted *Purg.* xxxiii. 43 ('DVX') of Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi!

⁵ It is curious that Landino, whose Commentary was first published in 1481,

but the equally celebrated prophecy of 'him that was to come' under the enigmatical number '515,' in *Par.* xxxiii. 43, has absurdly been supposed to point to the year 1517, when Luther set up his famous theses against Indulgences! The omission of the initial 1,000, and the error besides of two years in the date (since it was 1517, not 1515), were not apparently thought to damage the credit of this astounding interpretation. Others still clung to it by pointing out that it was in 1515 that Luther returned from his enlightening visit to Rome! Ugo Foscolo regarded Dante not only as an enemy of the Papal system, but as a religious and political Reformer, to which special mission he represents himself as consecrated by the symbolical action of S. Peter in *Par.* xxiv. 151-4¹. Then, again, another well-known writer, Aroux, going much further than this, dedicated to Pius IX in 1854 a work with the startling title, *Dante, Hérétique. Révolutionnaire, et Socialiste*: and he begins by expressing his conviction that Dante was, by his beliefs and teaching, excluded from the communion of the Church, and that he was even one of her bitterest and most dangerous enemies. That he did not, however, convince Pio Nono may be gathered from the fact that the Pope himself laid a wreath upon Dante's tomb at Ravenna three years later². A partial defence of Dante against Aroux was made by Boissard in 1858, the extent of which may be inferred from the title of his work, *Dante, Révolutionnaire et Socialiste, mais non Hérétique*.

Then, again, in our own day, we find Positivists and Agnostics sometimes claiming Dante as one of their prophets³. Strangest, perhaps, of all is it to read that Auguste Comte

commenting on this passage, declares that the astrological conditions point to a great religious event occurring in November 1484, day 25, hrs. 3, min. 41, when a conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter would take place, indicating 'mutation di religione,' and further, that such change would be a favourable one. He thinks that the poet, being an excellent mathematician, would have foreseen this by the help of astrology.

¹ Ugo Foscolo, *Discorso sul Testa*, &c., pp. 79-85.

² Hettinger, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

³ J. W. Cross, *Impressions of Dante*, and other essays, p. 67, &c.

himself used to regard the daily reading of a canto of the *Divina Commedia* and a chapter of the *De Imitatione Christi* as an almost essential element in the spiritual self-culture of the religion of humanity¹. Once more, and finally, an enthusiastic follower of Swedenborg² has indicated in a recent work a great variety of details in the divine poem which he declares to be in reality 'fore-gleams of that great dawn of light which has in this later time risen upon the world through the revelations granted to Swedenborg.' At the same time, he adds, we should be in no danger of forgetting the frail human authorship of the poem, and the wide distinction which must ever be drawn between this epic of mediaeval imagination and the great revelation which now comes to us in terms of unmistakable authority from things 'heard and seen' ('ex visis et auditis'); things 'hitherto kept secret from the foundation of the world.' Again, 'Dante must yet come to be read and studied with higher enjoyment, truer appreciation, and more profit, by those who can read him in the light afforded by Swedenborg, than he has ever yet been even by his warmest admirers and profoundest commentators.'

In short, it seems as if we could quite appropriately apply to the *Divina Commedia* of Dante the well-known epigram on the Bible:—

'Hic liber est in quo quaerit sua dogmata quisque ;
Invenit et pariter dogmata quisque sua.'

Surely we have here a phenomenon without a parallel in the literature of any age or country. That this should be the case with the Bible we can readily understand. It has special claims of its own, and, moreover, it embodies the thoughts and experiences of many different minds. But where shall we find any other single writer besides Dante to whom such varied tributes of admiration have been offered, any other under whose banner so many are eager to range themselves? And what makes this phenomenon still more striking—though perhaps the fact itself contains the key to the explanation—is,

¹ Oelsner, *Dante and Modern Thought*, p. 114.

² T. Sewell, *Dante and Swedenborg*, with other Essays.

that he was no 'trimmer'; that he never gives an uncertain sound; he is the very last man to whom the thought would occur of being 'all things to all men.' Yet he seems to have become so in spite of himself. For assuredly no writer ever used greater 'plainness of speech,' either in the sense of its direct simplicity or of that of its uncompromising outspokenness. He seems to have been fully conscious of this himself. In his interview with his ancestor Cacciaguida—one of the most celebrated episodes in the *Paradiso*—he confesses himself as for a moment hesitating what line to take. On the one hand, if he speaks his message plainly, 'twill have a very bitter savour unto many ('A molti fia sapor di forte agrume'). But if, on the other hand, he is 'a timid friend unto the truth,' he fears that he will 'lose his life among those who will call these present times ancient.' He does not long hesitate in making his choice. He resolves to declare all that he has heard without reserve, adding, with a touch of that blunt homeliness of expression with which he occasionally startles us, even (as here) in *Paradise* itself, 'those that itch may just scratch' ('Lascia pur grattar dov' è la rognà,' *Par.* xvii. 129).

It is just in this intensity and directness of Dante that the secret of his universal attractiveness (if it may be so termed) is probably to be found. He says nothing by halves. Whatever be his subject from time to time, he throws himself wholly into it, and not only wholly, but with a sort of Titanic energy, as though it were 'the one thing needful.' There are no safeguardings against over-statement or misconceptions, no anxieties about other aspects of the truth that might seem to be imperilled or compromised by his present fervour or vehemence. This is (as has been said of Luther) a natural fault of men of impetuous temper, who are also 'terribly in earnest.' Has Dante to speak of his privileges as a faithful son of the Church, or, as he once describes himself, 'among the lambs of the flock of Jesus Christ one of the most insignificant¹,' then the fervour of his devotion to his spiritual

¹ *Ep.* viii. § 5, l. 71.

Mother, and the heartiness of his submission to her authority in all matters of doctrine and discipline, could scarcely be more strongly expressed. Is he face to face with the abuses of Papal usurpation, the scandals of the Monastic Orders, or the evil lives of individual Popes, then—in spite of his protested reverence for the supreme Keys (*somme chiavi*), his fiery indignation finds vent in language which is scarcely surpassed by anything in the pages of Luther or Erasmus. Sometimes his large-hearted charity and breadth of sympathy are clothed in language that a liberal Churchman of our own days would be proud to adopt. Yet such passages afford rather occasional gleams than a steady light. He dares not apply these large-hearted conceptions consistently. Indeed, he is often (as we shall see later) strangely fettered by the narrow conceptions generally prevalent in his age. Once, indeed, apparently somewhat alarmed at his own boldness, he has been supposed to make a singular compromise with authority. It occurs in the splendid episode of King Manfred—that Manfred whom Dante dares to save¹, though he died under the ban of the Church, and even his bones had been dug up and scattered amidst anathemas and extinguished tapers, by order of Pope Clement IV. After Manfred has described this savage treatment, Dante makes him, with fine scorn, protest—‘Through their maledictions a man is not so wholly lost that the eternal Love of God cannot turn to him, so long as hope retains one shred of green².’ Then fearing lest he might have gone too far in depriving excommunication of its terrors, he adds—‘True it is that whosoever dies in contumacy of Holy Church, even though at the last he should repent, is shut out from access to Purgatory for thirty times as long as his presumption has lasted, unless through

¹ This is effected by the pure fiction of his repentance *in articulo mortis* exactly as in the case of Buonconte in Canto v. They both died in battle, but no one knew how or when. The body of Manfred was not discovered for some days, and that of Buonconte never (v. 92, 93). Hence their repentance, if it occurred, could never be known to any one on earth.

² We may compare the declaration of Fuller thus quaintly expressed:—‘The power of the keys, when abused, doth not shut the door of heaven, but in such cases doth only shoot the bolt beside the lock, not denying the innocent person entrance thereat.’

the prayers of the righteous that sentence be shortened.' Yet even in this the position of Dante is quite intelligible. For thus much might seem to be necessarily due to authority as such, and even when wrongly exercised. For had not S. Paul himself declared, even when speaking of a most corrupt and oppressive tyranny: 'The powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power resisteth an ordinance of God.' In so far, therefore, and at least in some degree, 'sin lieth at the door.'

We have now shown how, in a general sense, Dante has been accepted as 'a religious teacher' by men of the most diverse opinions, and that he has a mysterious power of striking chords which vibrate in sympathy with earnest minds and hearts of very different religious types. We pass on now to consider his religious position in its special relation to the teaching of the Church. How far is it consistent or inconsistent with that? For not only (as we have seen) have very frantic and desperate efforts been made by various Protestant writers to take possession of him, but many others of soberer tone have regarded him as a 'Reformer before the Reformation,' in wider or narrower senses of that flexible expression¹. Others, again, have felt bound to admit with reluctance that his position was inconsistent with that of a faithful son of the Church among 'the Christians of the thirteenth century.' We propose now to examine this question somewhat in detail, since a good deal of misapprehension and loose thinking prevails on the subject. It will be natural, then, that we should select such features in his religious teaching as bear upon the salient points of controversy between the later Reformers and the Church of Rome as Dante knew it.

The following will, perhaps, best serve our purpose:—

1. The relation of Church and State, or Pope and Emperor.
2. The authority of Holy Scripture.

¹ If it means that he in any sense anticipated the spirit of the 'Protestant Reformers' it is in no sense true. But if it means that he realized the urgent need for reform and amendment within the Church itself, and without infringing upon her unity or authority, it is conspicuously true.

3. The possibility of salvation outside the Catholic Church ; i. e. particularly, of the heathen.
4. The doctrine of Purgatory.
5. The cultus of the Virgin.
6. The reform of doctrine and discipline, especially in contrast with Savonarola and Luther.

I. The first of these subjects must occupy a much larger share of our attention than any of the others, and this for two reasons. (1) It is the very foundation of the whole fabric of Dante's system, religious, political, social. Hence its importance for the right understanding of very much not only in the *Divina Commedia* but in the other works of Dante can scarcely be over-estimated. (2) It is the chief, if not the only, subject on which Dante is really found to be in serious opposition to the generally accepted teaching of the Church. But, it may be observed at once, that, important and fundamental as is the matter in dispute, it can scarcely be said to be *de fide* as a doctrine of Christian belief¹. I mean that it may be held to be contumacious, but scarcely heretical, to criticize and oppose what has been authoritatively declared to be essential as a practical condition for the exercise of the Church's mission.

¹ That this is so, is conclusively shown by the scarcely less emphatic language of S. Bernard in his treatise *De Consideratione*. This work (which was known to Dante and commended by him, see *Ep.* x. § 28, l. 555) was addressed by S. Bernard to his friend and pupil Bernard of Pisa, who was elevated to the Papacy as Eugenius III, in 1145. The following are some of the sentiments found there :—'... nobis impositum senserimus ministerium, non dominium datum, ... Disce sarculo tibi opus esse non sceptro, ut opus facias prophetae' (II. c. vi. § 9). Then having quoted S. Luke xxii. 25, 26 'Reges gentium dominantur eorum ... Vos autem non sic,' S. Bernard adds: 'Planum est, Apostolis interdicatur dominatus. I ergo tu, et tibi usurpare aude aut dominans apostolatum, aut apostolicus dominatum. Plane ab alterutro prohiberis ... Forma apostolica haec est: dominatio interdicatur, indicitur ministratio' (*ib.* §§ 10 and 11). 'Exi in mundum non tanquam dominus sed tanquam villicus' (§ 12) ... 'Domabis lupos, sed ovibus non dominaberis' (§ 13). Again in B. iv. c. iii. § 6 he sarcastically observes that S. Peter is not known to have gone in procession adorned with gems and gold and silken garments, riding on a white palfrey and escorted by soldiers, and yet he thought that without all this he could sufficiently carry out our Lord's commission 'Pasce oves meos.' 'In his successisti non Petro sed Constantino.' This is very plain speaking, which is scarcely surpassed by anything in Dante. See further note, p. 18.

Now, on the one hand, many passages might be quoted in which Dante seems to attribute a universal supremacy to the Pope in language which an Innocent III or a Boniface VIII might willingly adopt as his own. But there is a most important qualification of such language in still more numerous passages which must never be overlooked.

Dante's conception of God's providential government of the world was a Dual Monarchy—a Universal Emperor in things temporal and a Universal Pope in things spiritual. Each of these was absolutely supreme in his own sphere. Each was equally an impious intruder in the sphere of the other. In the allegorical representation of the Church Militant among the famous frescoes of Simone Memmi in the Spanish chapel at Florence, the artist has expressed this idea by depicting the Pope and Emperor sitting side by side upon one throne, exalted above all the other representatives of ecclesiastical or civil authority; the Pope is on the right and the Emperor on the left; and this also would express Dante's idea as to their relative dignity. The teaching of Dante on this subject is expressed with incisive clearness in the *De Monarchia*. The whole purpose of the third book of that treatise is to determine whether the authority of the Roman Emperor is derived directly from God, or mediately from any vicar or representative of God on the earth. The result of a variety of arguments is thus summarized: 'Thus it is clear that the temporal authority of the Emperor descends immediately upon himself from the fount of universal authority,' i.e. God (c. 16). In the preceding chapter Dante declares that for the Church to convey such authority to the Empire would be 'contra naturam ecclesiae.' The 'nature' or 'essence' of the Church is 'Nihil aliud nisi vita Christi tam in dictis quam in factis comprehensa.' Christ's own command to Peter (continues Dante) when He gave him his solemn commission was "Peter, follow me,"—follow Him, that is, who not long before had declared "My kingdom is not of this world." It is therefore of the very 'form' or essence of the Church, 'illud idem dicere, illud idem sentire.' Therefore, temporal authority cannot either be possessed or conferred

by the Church without contradicting the very nature of the Church as it is defined by these express words of Christ. Hence the universal temporal dominion claimed by such Popes as Gregory VII and IX, Adrian IV, Alexander III, Innocent III and IV, Boniface VIII, and others, would be entirely repudiated by Dante. He would, in fact, have regarded such claims as utterly preposterous. As to the 'Donation of Constantine,' on which the Church's claim to temporal dominion largely rested, it would of course never have occurred to Dante or to any of his contemporaries to doubt it as an historical fact¹. But, for all that, he had no hesitation in denouncing it as the source of untold mischief to the Church and the world. For example, in *Inf.* xix, where the Simoniacal Popes are so severely handled, we read, adopting Milton's almost literal rendering :—

'Ah, Constantine! of how much ill was cause
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
That the first wealthy pope receiv'd of thee.'

Further, in *Par.* xx. 55–60, we find that as Constantine's intention was good², though it bore such evil fruit, he was

¹ Hettinger, *op. cit.* p. 384, says that this was first called in question by Laurentius Valla (d. 1457). But in a letter addressed to the Emperor Frederic I, in 1152, in which the writer asserts that the source of the Imperial and all other authority flows from the people of the city of Rome ('dum Imperator sit Romanorum non Romani Imperatoris,' &c.), the Donation of Constantine is scouted as 'Mendacium et fabula haeretica,' which is so utterly exploded that even 'mercenarii et mulierculae' have abandoned it. (See Martène and Durand, tom. ii. p. 556.)

² It is a curious reading of history to find Dante ascribing the foundation of Constantinople by Constantine to the desire of 'leaving the coast clear' for the Pope at Rome! See *Par.* xx. 56, 75 :

'Sotto buona intenzion che fe' mal frutto,
Per ordere al Pastor, si fece Greco.'

But in this he is anticipated by the learned Canonist Gregory IX, in a letter to Frederic II, in 1236, which contains the following astonishing statements—[Constantinus] 'nefarium reputans ut, ubi caput totius Christianae religionis ab Imperatore caelesti disponitur, ibidem terrenus Imperator potestate aliqua fungeretur, Italiam Apostolicae dispositioni relinquens, sibi novam in Graecia mansionem elegit' (Raynaldi, *Ann. Eccles.* tom. ii. p. 142). B. Latini, *Trésors*, I. pt. ii. c. 87, says that Constantine 'por essaucier le nom Jhesu Crist docta il Sainte Eglise, et li dona toutes les emperiaus dignitez.' Dante elsewhere refers to the 'good intention' of Constantine. *De Mon.* II. xiii.

not therefore deprived of his eternal reward. But in the *De Monarchia* Dante boldly grapples with what we may call the *legal* argument based upon the 'donation,' and he declares emphatically that the donation itself was absolutely null and void (*De Mon.* iii. 10). First of all, he does not hesitate to treat the metaphor of the 'tunica inconvulsa'—the seamless robe of Christ, the universally recognized type of the unity of the Church—as equally applicable to the unity of the Empire. 'If Constantine,' he argues, 'had effectually transferred to the Pope any of the possessions of the Empire, the "seamless robe" would have been rent, which not even they who pierced Christ Himself with a spear dared to rend.' The Emperor therefore gave that which he had no right nor power to alienate; the Pope received that which he had no right nor power to take¹. For, even supposing that the Emperor had had the power to give, the Church would still be precluded by our Lord's express words from accepting or holding temporal dominion. But Dante goes even further than this. He declares that the Church has no right to hold even any temporal possessions whatsoever. 'It was entirely disqualified from accepting any temporal possessions by the express prohibitive command, "Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey".'² And so he bluntly concludes, 'the action of the Emperor was impossible, because the receiver was disqualified from receiving: "propter patientis indispositionem."'

The only possible sense in which the Pope *could* have received any such gifts was not as their owner but as the trustee of God's poor. 'Non tanquam possessor sed tanquam

fin. 'si . . . nunquam sua pia intentio ipsum fecisset.' *Purg.* xxxii. 138 . . . 'pium offerat. Forse con intentione santa e benigna.' So in *De Mon.* II. xii. 17, he describes the 'patrimonia Ecclesiae' as 'bene data et male possessa.'

¹ This is very clearly put in *De Mon.* III. x. 27 'Constantinus alienare non poterat Imperii dignitatem, nec Ecclesia recipere.' And again, *ib.* 68 'Imperii auctoritate fungenti scindere Imperium non licet.'

² 'Sed Ecclesia omnino indisposita erat ad temporalia recipienda, per praeceptum prohibitivum expressum,' &c., *De Mon.* III. x. 105. 'Patet igitur quod nec Ecclesia recipere per modum possessionis, nec ille conferre per modum alienationis poterat,' *ib.* 120.

fructuum pro Ecclesia pro Christi pauperibus dispensator¹. Similarly in *Par.* xii. 93, Dante speaks of tithes as 'decimas quae sunt pauperum Dei'; and in *Purg.* xvi. 132 he says that one may clearly read the same lesson in the fact that the sons of Levi had no heritage². With equal boldness does Dante face the argument that, since Charles the Great was crowned Emperor by Pope Adrian I (an error for Leo III), the Imperial dignity was therefore derived from and conferred by the Pope³. His curt reply must be given in his own words—'Dico quod nihil dicunt: usurpatio enim juris non facit jus' (*De Mon.* III. xi).

No wonder that a work containing such unpalatable and uncompromising statements as the *De Monarchia*—one in which Dante thus (to use his own expression) 'sillogizzò invidiosi veri'—should have speedily found its way on to the Index, and should have been more than once solemnly condemned and publicly burnt⁴. Its condemnation was again renewed at the Council of Trent. At the same time Dante expresses this teaching plainly enough in the *Divina Commedia* also; for instance, in *Purg.* xvi. 106–129. The passage is too long to quote, but the following are some of the principal points in it. 'Time was when Rome had two suns, that showed to men the one and the other path, that of the world and that of God. Now one has extinguished the other; and the sword is united with the pastoral staff; and thus joined, of very necessity they go ill. The Church of Rome by confounding in itself two governments (i. e. the

¹ *De Mon.* III. x. 128. *Comp.* II. xii. 4: 'nec miseret eos pauperum Christi, quibus non solum defraudatio fit in ecclesiarum proventibus,' &c. ('eos' refers to those who plunder the possessions of the Empire as well as the patrimonies of the Church, &c.); and again, *ib.* l. 12, 'pauperibus quorum patrimonium sunt Ecclesiae.' Add the bitter lines *Par.* xxii. 82–84.

² S. Peter Damian employs the same argument to prove that 'Clerici non habent proprietatem rerum quas possident': 'Est notandum, non solum Levitas sed etiam Leviticarum pecora Dominus sua esse testatur,' *Opusc.* xxvii, *Ad clericos Fanensis Ecclesiae*.

³ So also argues (among many others) Gervase of Tilbury, *Ot. Imp.* Dec. ii. c. 19.

⁴ As at Bologna by the Papal Legate, not long after Dante's death. He was with difficulty prevented from subjecting Dante's bones to the same treatment. See *Vita di Boccaccio*, c. xvi.

spiritual and temporal) falls into the mire and befouls both itself and its charge¹.

It is interesting to observe the process by which Dante arrived at this cardinal doctrine of his system, how he seems to build it up step by step, and by a sort of logical necessity, from the most simple and fundamental propositions. This is very clearly explained in the last chapter of the *De Monarchia*. Man (he argues) has a corruptible and an incorruptible nature. Each of these has its appointed end or goal. These are the happiness of this life, and the happiness of the life eternal. The former is symbolized (ἐξωτερικῶς) by the earthly Paradise, the latter by the Paradise of heaven. The former is reached through the practice of the moral and intellectual virtues, the latter through the practice of the theological virtues, i.e. Faith, Hope, and Charity. Hence man needs a double guidance corresponding to these double ends: that of the Pope, to lead him by the light of Revelation to eternal happiness: that of the Emperor to lead him by the light of Philosophy to temporal happiness. From God, says Dante

¹ The censure so obscurely expressed in *Purg.* xvi. 98, 99—

Perochè il pastor che precede

Rimmar: può ma non ha l'aglie fesse—

is perhaps best explained in this same sense. It is curious to contrast with the language of Dante that of S. Bernard, claiming the 'two swords' for the Pope. See *Ep.* 256: 'Petri uterque sc. gladius' est, alter suo nutu, alter sua manu, quoties necesse est, evaginandus. Et quidem, de quo minus videbatur, de ipso ad Petrum dictum est, "Mitte gladium tuum in vaginam." Ergo saus erat et ille, sed non sua manu utique educendus.' Almost the same words occur in the Treatise *De Consideratione*, bk. III. c. iii. Compare Dante's curious treatment of the argument from the two swords in *De Mon.* III. ix. It must not of course be forgotten, especially if any one were to think of applying the *dicta* of Dante to the modern Papal claim for 'Temporal Power,' that the meaning of the term is now entirely different. The restricted sense in which it is now demanded, in order that the Pope may not be a 'subject' under any other ruler, has nothing in common with the Universal and Imperial Dominion referred to in the text, when, for example, a Pope (Gregory IX) demanded that 'Kings and princes must kneel at the feet of priests, and Christian Emperors must subordinate their actions not only to the Pope but even to other clergy' (Gregorovius, *op. cit.* iv. p. 185). It was this intolerable usurpation which Dante opposed, just as the Hohenstaufen and other emperors opposed it. But language or actions directed against this afford no proof that their authors would have resented the claim for the small amount of 'temporal power' which is maintained to-day.

in one of his *Epistles*¹, as from a single point 'bifurcates the power of Peter and of Caesar.' Hence at the beginning of the *De Monarchia* Dante defines the Emperor as 'the one Ruler over all in time, and in all those things and over all those things that are measured by time².' Yet he rules as God's vicegerent, and not for his own advantage or interest, but for that of those over whom he rules. Any form of government that does not aim at this is denounced by Dante as a perverted form, following a well-known dictum of Aristotle in the *Politics*. So, as the Pope is 'servus servorum Domini,' the Emperor likewise is 'procul dubio minister omnium³.'

Thus we see that Pope and Emperor must each be supreme in his own sphere. Neither depends in any way on the other. Neither may in any way interfere with the other. In their complete independence and harmonious co-operation lies the one condition of happiness for the whole human race. That this was the Providential plan and purpose of God for the well-being of the world, Dante had no more doubt than that God was the Creator of the world. For him it had the dignity and sacredness of a creed, for faith in which he would 'even have dared to die.' It was not for him a question of politics, or even of patriotism, but of religion itself. Those who opposed this design in the supposed interest of either Pope or Emperor were assuredly 'fighting against God,' and so Dante 'hated them right sore, even as though they were his enemies.' Thus in *Par.* vi. 102 he denounces with impartial severity the politics of Guelf and Ghibelline alike,

'Sì che forte a veder è chi più falli,'

'so that it is hard to see which is in the greater fault.' Such

¹ *Ep.* v. § 5, l. 90.

² *De Mon.* I. ii. 4. This may be further illustrated by the following remarkable passage from the Epistle to the Princes of Italy. See *Ep.* v. § 7: 'Qui bibitis fluentia ejus (scil. Imperatoris) ejusque maria navigatis; qui calcatis arenas littorum et Alpium summitates, quae sunt suae; qui publicis quibuscunque gaudetis, et res privatas vinculo suae legis non aliter possidetis . . . Hortus enim ejus et lacus est quod coelum circuit: nam "Dei est mare, et ipse fecit illud, et aridam fundaverunt manus ejus."'

³ *De Mon.* I. xii. 87.

was Dante's ideal. It is (as has well been said) 'the ideal of a philosopher, a theologian, a poet, rather than that of a statesman.' For it scarcely needs to be pointed out that this scheme, so symmetrical and logical in theory, is, and must ever be, hopelessly impracticable in fact. There is no such hard and fast line as it implies between the two parts of man's nature, or the two spheres of his practice. However distinct in conception, they are inseparable in fact ('λόγῳ δύο, ἀχώριστα πεφυκότε'). It would 'pass the wit of man' to draw the required distinctions. Dante would probably not have been in the least moved by such an objection. He would contemplate it with the serene confidence which the writer once heard expressed by Mr. Ruskin in concluding a lecture at Oxford in which he had advocated one of his benevolent but Utopian schemes for the amelioration of society: 'You may tell me that all this is impossible. It may be so. I have only to say that it is indispensable.' Dante would doubtless make a similar reply, and he would probably remind his argumentative opponent, with a smile of ineffable contempt upon his thin-cut lips, that 'with God all things are possible.'

It is interesting to note that the same impossible Utopian scheme of civil and spiritual authority, working independently yet in harmony (though, it is true, centred in one individual), seems to have been cherished for a short time by Pio Nono in the early part of his Pontificate. In the exciting times of 1848, or thereabouts, Archdeacon Manning was in Rome, eagerly watching the course of events. It is a curious comment upon Dante's theory (*mutatis mutandis*) to find him writing thus: 'I do not see why a Constitutional Government should not exist in Rome, penetrated by the idea of the Church of Christ, and spiritually faithful to the Pope. . . . If the Church be a divine polity, and if free institutions be divine blessings, I cannot see why they should not co-exist.' The following passage explains more in detail how it was proposed to work such a scheme. Manning was informed by one of the popular leaders that they wished for the separation of the spiritual and temporal powers, and that the Pope

should have two Ministries at home and two representatives abroad, expressing his twofold office and character, ecclesiastical and civil; that in this way the twofold relations abroad might be preserved, and the Pope be at peace with the Church, say, in Austria, while he was at war with the Empire! Again, in the sphere of more practical politics, some such dream as that of Dante seems to have possessed for years the brain of Philip II of Spain. He hoped to become the political head of Catholic Christendom, working harmoniously with the Pope as its spiritual head¹. But this design never reached the point where the adjustment of its practical details would have to be faced.

Dante is 'nothing if not logical,' at any rate according to the mediaeval conception of what was logical. Hence this fundamental doctrine has far-reaching consequences, which may be traced throughout almost all his writings, and which give the key to the explanation and right understanding of very much more in them than we should at first suspect. One of its many logical consequences is this: that the people of Rome, as founders of the Empire, were as much God's

¹ The same distinction, it must be always remembered, between the spiritual and temporal power was maintained by the Emperors in the long conflict between the Papacy and the Empire, at least in the Hohenstaufen period. Those great Emperors did not desire, any more than Dante, to oppose or to curtail the spiritual and ecclesiastical authority of the Papacy. Even the repeatedly excommunicated Frederic II was a victorious crusader, a persecutor of heresy, and according to ancient chronicles died clothed in the Cistercian habit, and fortified by the absolution of the Archbishop of Palermo. There is no reason, as far as I know, to doubt the orthodoxy of his formal beliefs, however much his life may have been one of epicurean luxury and practical infidelity. For this he has earned the condemnation of Dante (*Inf.* x). But in spite of his implacable persecution by successive Popes, Frederic never dreamt of setting up an anti-Pope, as was done so frequently by the Emperors of the previous century, whenever the policy of the Popes proved inconvenient. When he heard of the death of Gregory IX, he at once withdrew his forces which were attacking Rome, to show that his quarrel was only with the individual Pontiff, and not with the Church. Even Otto IV, the Guelf Emperor favoured by Innocent III, very soon protested, 'I do not meddle with the spiritual power . . . but as Emperor I will be judge of all temporal matters, throughout the Empire' (Gregorovius, *op. cit.* v. p. 91). This distinction must always be borne in mind in reading either the criticisms of Dante, or the history of the internecine, and under the circumstances inevitable, conflict between the Papacy and the Empire.

'chosen people' as the Jews. Each was so 'chosen' for carrying out one branch of His great twofold design; both these branches, moreover, coming, as it were, to maturity together in the nearly synchronous events of the establishment of the Roman Empire and the Incarnation of Christ. That the people of Rome held such a position is the whole theme of the second book of the *De Monarchia*. Every step in their history, as they gradually advanced to the universal dominion which God purposed for them, was, in Dante's view, as much divinely ordered and directed as the course of the history of the other 'chosen people' in the Old Testament. Roman and Jewish history are equally 'sacred history' for Dante. In *De Mon.* II. v, he traces this out from the early kings of Rome onwards through a series of the principal heroes of her annals, in a panegyric which reminds us somewhat of the roll of the heroes of faith in Heb. xi. A similar enumeration, and for the same purpose, occurs in *Conv.* IV. v, where Dante apostrophizes those who are too blind to see in all this the manifest intervention of God as 'stoltissime e vilissime bestiuole che a guisa d'uomini pascete.' Such acts of heroism and self-devotion could not have been performed without direct divine assistance. Hence the Roman people is described as 'populus ille sanctus, pius, et gloriosus.' The Roman eagle is 'the sacred bird,' 'the holy ensign.' 'Her citizens were not human, but divine.' Then, finally, as Dante several times argues (borrowing an idea which occurs very frequently in Orosius), God set His seal to the Universal Empire of Augustus by sending His Son into the world to be born and enrolled as a Roman citizen under his rule¹. Again, Dante claims that both the Church and the Roman Empire have similarly received the seal of God's approval in the evidence of miracles. On the one hand (following S. Augustine²), he declares, as one ground at least for his own

¹ S. Luke is quoted in support of this as 'scriba mansuetudinis Christi' in *De Mon.* I. xvi. 16; and by the curious title of 'bos noster evangelizans' in *Ep.* vii. § 3, l. 65. Add *De Mon.* II. ix. 99; xii. 24, &c.

² See *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 5 *fin.* 'Si vero per Apostolos Christi . . . etiam ista miracula facta esse non credunt, hoc nobis unum grande miraculum sufficit, quod . . . terrarum orbis sine ullis miraculis credidit.'

belief in the miracles of the New Testament, that if the world had turned to Christianity without miracles, this alone would be a miracle an hundred times greater than all the others (*Par.* xxiv. 108). He would probably not have hesitated to apply a similar argument to the steady onward march of Roman power to the universal dominion predestined for it. But however this may be, Dante definitely appeals to the prodigies and portents described by Livy, Virgil, and Lucan, as a proof that God worked miracles for the furtherance of His purpose to establish the Universal Empire of Rome¹. 'Therefore, since it would be impious to say that anything thus favoured by God is otherwise than pleasing to Him, it follows that the Empire of Rome, which was thus "miraculorum suffragio adjutum," was willed by God, and consequently both was, and is, of right (*de jure*).' So at the beginning of the *Inferno*, Dante, when staggered at the announcement that he was to visit the unseen world under the guidance of Virgil, observes that twice only has this privilege been conceded to mortal man, viz. to Æneas and to S. Paul, the reasons in both cases being adequate and parallel—the one being elect in God's counsels to be the father of Rome and of her Empire, the other being the 'chosen vessel' to effect the universal spread of the Gospel.

Once more, in the belief of Dante, the literature in which the history and poetry of the Roman and Jewish peoples were enshrined was in both cases, though doubtless in a very different degree, 'inspired.' Thus Virgil is quoted as 'divinus poeta noster' side by side with Scripture, in *De Mon.* II. iii, and similarly elsewhere. The well-known lines of Virgil, 'Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,' &c., are cited as a definite *proof* of God's purpose of a universal Empire for Rome, just as we might quote a text of Scripture. 'Therefore' (proceeds Dante, after quoting this passage) 'the Roman people, in subduing to themselves the whole world, assumed that Universal Empire of right².' Another well-known passage of Virgil ('Imperium sine fine dedi,' &c.) is quoted in *Conv.* IV. iv. 115 with a still more emphatic

¹ *De Mon.* II. iv. 27.

² *Ib.* II. vii. *ad fin.*

declaration of its inspired authority, viz. 'as Virgil says in the first Aeneid, *speaking in the person of God*' ('in persona di Dio parlando¹'). Again in *Ep.* vii. § 3, l. 60, a quotation from Virgil (who is not however named) is introduced by the remarkable formula 'scriptum etenim nobis est.' It may be added that not only Virgil, but Livy, Ovid, and Lucan are also cited as having a similar quasi-inspired authority. We may note especially a quotation from Lucan, as 'scriptura paganorum²,' in conjunction with Jeremiah, the Psalms, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus. And, by a sort of converse process, Dante says that 2 Tim. iv. 8 is applicable to the 'Roman citizen (*homo Romanus*), who can truly say, "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness"; laid up, namely, in the eternal purpose of God's providence.' Indeed, the way in which Dante commonly employs the word 'Scriptura' or 'Scrittura' (especially in the *Convito*) is very noteworthy. It is often applied to the writings of Latin authors in prose and verse, and also to those of the Greek philosophers, as well as to the Bible. Even when Dante has to repudiate an error of Plato, he adds, with rare charity, 'Perhaps his opinion is of other guise than his words sound, and it may have a meaning not to be derided' (*Par.* iv. 55). Dante would certainly fully sympathize with the dictum of St. Clement of Alexandria, when he maintains that Philosophy was given to the Gentiles by God just as much as the Law was given to the Jews, and in both cases as a *παιδαγωγός*, 'to lead men to Christ.'

Another remarkable result of this way of looking at what we commonly call 'sacred' and 'profane' history is that curious practice of Dante—which has often been noticed, but not always with a perception of this key to its explanation—of balancing quotations from Scripture and classical authors, and still more frequently of alternating examples from sacred and profane history. This, though found in all his works, is especially conspicuous in the *Purgatorio* (see especially *Purg.* xii). The explanation of this is that one was held by

¹ This may perhaps only mean that the words are put into the mouth of Jupiter; but still they are quoted by Dante as absolutely authoritative.

² This is in *Ep.* x. § 22, the passage quoted being the famous line

'Juppiter est quodcunque vides quodcunque moveris.'

Dante to be as much under the guidance of God's Providence as the other. There is surely much truth and grandeur in this reading of human history. One could imagine Dante pleading for it in the language of S. Paul: 'Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.'

Thus we have seen that Dante's 'political' theories, as they are sometimes misleadingly called, were an integral part of his religious belief. This, indeed, must be the case in a theocracy, and in Dante's view the Providential order for human society was a universal theocracy, in which God had two vicegerents or vicars instead of one. Bearing in mind, therefore, the sacred character with which Dante invested the offices of both Pope and Emperor, it will be interesting next to trace his treatment of individual Popes and Emperors, both in regard to their conduct, character, and policy upon earth, and their final destiny hereafter. First, in regard to the Popes. However great was Dante's professed reverence for 'the supreme Keys,' he does not allow it to fetter him in the least in the freedom of his criticism of the policy and character of individual Popes. Very similarly Lamennais, even in his Catholic days, preserved for himself considerable freedom of criticism by distinguishing between the acts of the temporal prince and the spiritual Pontiff. Dante does not hesitate to place one Pope, Anastasius II, in hell for heresy (*Inf.* xi. 8, 9), following the popular, though probably erroneous, tradition then current, that he had fallen into the Monophysite heresy. The other Popes mentioned in any detail by Dante are mostly contemporaries.

It may here be noted that, while the abuses of the Church were no doubt very great in Dante's time, they were not quite at their worst. The frightful scandals of the tenth and eleventh centuries, arising from the infamies of Sergius III, John X, XI, and XII (then, as later, an ill-omened name for the Papacy), Benedict IX (Pope at the age of twelve by purchase¹)—these had happily faded into the background of

¹ A.D. 1033. See Milman, *L. C.*, bk. V. c. xiv. vol. III. pp. 357 *seqq.* He quotes Radolphus Glaber, iv. 5—'Puer ferme decennis, intercedente thesauro-

history and had been forgotten. The age of the Borgia and Medici Popes, which brought on the cataclysm of the Reformation, was yet to come. But every one must be struck, in reading the history of those evil times, with the complete loss of any spiritual associations in connexion with either the character or the office of the Pope. This is hard for us to realize, who have been familiar for so many generations with a totally different condition of things. The Pope and Emperor were then two rivals for universal dominion actuated by the same motives, stained by the same crimes, working by the same unscrupulous means, with little more trace of spiritual character about one of them than about the other, except that one claimed to wield a spiritual weapon which was equivalent to the possession of so many extra battalions on the part of the other; unless indeed the latter, like Frederic II, employed Saracens and such like mercenaries who had the advantage (as has been happily said) of being 'excommunication-proof.' The 'unworthiness of the minister' was not thought in any way to blunt that weapon of excommunication, which was the common Papal form of declaration of war¹. Dante protests against this abuse of the power of interdict or excommunication:—

'Già si solea con le spade far guerra;
 * Ma or si fa togliendo or qui or quivi
 Lo pan che il pio padre a nessun serra.'

(Par. xviii. 127-9.)

This condition of things lasted on more or less and with occasional exceptions for another two and a half centuries, when a religious character was once more imparted to the Papacy by such fervent zealots as Paul IV (with whom, in the striking language of Sir J. R. Seeley, began 'the reconversion

rum pecunia, electus exstitit a Romanis.^{*} See also Gregorovius, *op. cit.* iv. p. 41. Benedict after a few years' tenure sold the Papacy to a kinsman who assumed the title of Gregory VI, but afterwards, in spite of his abdication, endeavoured to repossess himself of the sacred dignity (Milman *l. c.* p. 360). But nearly 500 years later Giovanni de' Medici (afterwards Pope Leo X) was ordained at seven, an Abbot at eight, and Cardinal at thirteen.

¹ In the twelfth century Popes occasionally even led their own troops into battle; and one Pope (Lucius II) died from a wound received when conducting an unsuccessful attack upon the Capitol.

to Christianity of the Papal See') and Pius V (the last canonized Pope)—a character which has lasted to our own day, and which we cannot suppose will ever again be lost. But it is important to remember how totally different were the circumstances under which Dante lived, and wrote as he did both as to the ideal Pope of his hopes and aspirations, and the actual Popes of his bitter experience. The Popes of Dante's time were mostly obscure intriguers or political puppets¹, flitting rapidly across the stage of history. Dante lived under no fewer than fourteen of them, and of these, thirteen had ascended the throne by the time he had reached the age of forty, although during that period three long vacancies of the Papal throne had occurred, together amounting to nearly six years. In the case of one of these Popes, if we are to follow (as there seems little doubt that we should) the generally accepted interpretation of the celebrated line—

‘Che fece per viltà lo gran rifiuto,’

and suppose it to refer to Celestine V, then Dante has even dared to reverse the Church's decree of canonization. In *Inf.* xix we have a series of contemporary Popes—Nicholas III², Boniface VIII, and Clement V—condemned for simony with every circumstance of scorn and contempt³. It is true that Boniface was still alive at the assumed date of the vision (1300), and that Clement V was not even elected

¹ We should except from this description such strong Popes as Gregory X, Nicholas III, and Boniface VIII. The nepotism of the last two was on a scale so portentous and shameless as to be almost incredible. History more than confirms the invective of Dante.

² This was Giovanni Gaetani Orsini. When Dante calls him ‘figliuol dell’ orsa’ in *Inf.* xix. 70, it may be noted that in chronicles and also in Papal Briefs members of the Orsini family are commonly spoken of as ‘filii Ursi.’

³ It is very remarkable that the *last words* uttered by Beatrice in the sacred poem are the fierce denunciations of Clement and Boniface which form the conclusion of *Par.* xxx. It has been remarked that these denunciations recur at the end of each well-marked division of the *Paradiso*; e.g. (1) Canto ix *fin.*, in the mouth of Archbishop Folco, before the passage from the heavens of the ‘inferior’ planets (cf. ix. 118) to that of the Sun: (2) Cantos xxi and xxii, by S. Peter Damian and S. Benedict at the end of the seven Planetary Heavens, and before entering that of the Fixed Stars: (3) between that Heaven and the ascent to the *Primum Mobile*, in the mouth of S. Peter in Canto xxvii: (4) when Beatrice takes leave of Dante (as above) in the Empyrean.

Pope till 1305 and lived to 1314; but Dante has ingeniously anticipated his fate under the guise of prophecy put into the mouth of Nicholas¹. Dante says that, but for his reverence for his sacred office, he would have used much severer language of Nicholas himself. But any one who reads Canto xix of the *Inferno* will feel that this is a fine stroke of irony to intensify the severity of the words of burning fiery indignation, which even Dante himself could scarcely have surpassed, if he would.

In Purgatory we find two Popes, both contemporary with Dante; one (Adrian V) expiating the sin of avarice, and the other (Martin IV) that of gluttony; the eels of Lake Bolsena and the good wine Vernaccia of Genoa having been too much for him. A third Pope, Clement IV, is not mentioned as having been himself met with by Dante either in Hell or Purgatory, but his cruel and vindictive treatment of the dead body of King Manfred (which has been already referred to) is freely denounced. It is to be noted that in the first case, that of Adrian V, as soon as Dante found that he was in the presence of a Pope, he at once fell on his knees to do him homage. But Adrian immediately raised him up, recalling the language of the angel in the Apocalypse to S. John: 'I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus' (comp. *Rev.* xix. 10 with *Purg.* xix. 133-5). This Pope, Adrian V, has a special interest for us as being one of the two Popes elected as laymen². Indeed, Adrian never received Holy Orders during his short reign of eighty-nine days, though he promulgated some very important decrees modifying the whole system of Papal elections, the authority of which was fully recognized. Another significant detail may be noted in reference to this interview

¹ A later Pope still, John XXII (1316-1334), is denounced by anticipation, together with Clement V, in *Purg.* xxvii. 58.

This statement as to Adrian (elected 1276) is made on the authority of Cartwright, *Papal Conclaves*, p. 164. There seems however to be some doubt whether he was a layman, or in Deacon's Orders. It appears to be certain that he never received even Priest's Orders during his short Pontificate (Milman, *L. C.* bk. XI. c. 4; Gregorovius, *op. cit.* v. p. 475). The other Pope who was beyond doubt elected as a layman was John XIX (1024-1033) (Milman, *L. C.* bk. V. c. 14).

with Pope Adrian. Before Dante knew whom he was addressing, he employed the usual form *tu* and *tuo*, 'thou' and 'thine,' in speaking to him (ll. 93, &c.). When he discovers that he is a Pope he adopts *voi* and *vostro* (l. 131), which at that time (though it is quite different now) was a mark of high respect. This appears from *Par.* xvi. 10 and 16-18, where Dante employs it in addressing his ancestor Cacciaguida¹, and draws special attention to it, regretting its less frequent use in the deteriorating manners of his countrymen. It was traditionally supposed to have originated in addressing royalty, just as 'we' is still used by such personages themselves. Nor must we forget to mention the indignation which Dante expresses (in *Purg.* xx) for the insults offered to his great enemy Boniface VIII at Anagni, and the deep sympathy and respect with which he there refers to the Pope himself. It is a touching feature in this passage that Dante almost reproduces in it the language of a hymn attributed to Boniface (see Nannucci, *op. cit.* i. p. 421).

In Paradise—though, of course, Dante would have undoubtedly admitted the presence of many holy and sainted Popes there—six of the early Popes are eulogized by S. Peter in *Par.* xxvii—yet it is remarkable that only one is mentioned by name as having been observed by Dante in Paradise, and it is a curious case to form so marked an exception. It is 'Pietro Ispano,' Peter of Spain, commonly known as John XXI, who was elected in 1276, and reigned for eight months only². He also, therefore, was contemporary with Dante. It is sometimes said that his orthodoxy was not beyond suspicion. He was a celebrated writer on Logic, and 'his name lives for evermore' not only in the pages of Dante, but also in those of our text-books on Logic—or, at least, if not his name, his handiwork, for he was the author of the

¹ Other persons specially honoured with a similar form of address are Cavalcante, Farinata degli Uberti, Brunetto Latini, Conrad Malaspina, Guido Guinicelli, and Beatrice herself.

² See *Par.* xii. 134. 5. He was in fact by birth a Portuguese, and it may be noted that he was the only one of that nation that has ever been elected Pope. Dante merely describes him as 'Pietro Ispano,' without any allusion to his having been Pope.

immortal lines, 'Barbara, Celarent,' &c., with which most Oxford men are, or should be, familiar.

The most startling passage of all in this relation is the fiery denunciation of the abuses of the Court of Rome, and of individual Popes, which Dante puts into the mouth of S. Peter in *Par.* xxvii, whereat for very shame and indignation the brightness of heaven itself became lurid and dim, even as it may be supposed to have done (adds Dante) at the supreme moment of the Redeemer's Passion. A few of the opening lines will suffice to show the key in which this scathing outburst is pitched. S. Peter is made to say: 'He who usurps upon earth my place, my place, my place, which is vacant in the sight of the Son of God, has made of my burial-place a sewer of blood and filth, whereat the perverted one, who fell from here on high, down there gloats.' Thus Dante takes upon himself in fact to *dethrone* the reigning Pope, Boniface VIII, declaring that he is not Pope at all in the sight of God. In explanation of this it may be interesting to add that Mr. Gladstone once told the writer that Dr. Döllinger, conversing with him on this passage, declared that he had no doubt that Dante meant this to be literally true. He would regard the resignation of the Papacy by Celestine V as utterly invalid, as much so as we have seen that he considered the Donation of Constantine to be. Consequently the election of Boniface, while a legitimate Pope was still living, was null and void. Dante would hold this all the more strongly because the *gran rifiuto* was believed to have been brought about by the artifices and machinations of Boniface himself. As Celestine died in 1296, Dante would not, I suppose, consider that the same flaw affected the title of Boniface's successors, but only that there had been a vacancy of eight or nine years in the Papacy¹. It is said that the learned Egidio

¹ Mr. Gladstone has since written to me to say that he did not understand Dr. Döllinger to supply this saving clause as to the authority of subsequent Pontiffs, and that he did not at any rate guard against the inference that all subsequent Papal elections were invalidated because there was no one qualified to elect, and that 'therefore a permanent lapse was entailed.' It seems to me, however, difficult to believe that Dr. Döllinger would have seriously maintained this. The late Dr. Littledale indeed pressed an argument

Colonna¹ (though a member of the family most hated by Boniface) was made a Cardinal by him as a reward for his treatise, *De Renunciatione Papae*, in which he repelled the doubts as to the legitimacy of Boniface's election². The following remarkable passage from the Commentary of Boccaccio (*Lex. xxxviii ad fin.*) shows that such doubts were felt by others than Dante, and for at least many years after his death. After endeavouring (vainly as I think) to show that *bestialitade* in *Inf. xi. 83* refers to the brutish obstinacy of heretics (i.e. Circle VI of the *Inferno*), who will often rather die than yield to the opinions of those who are wiser and better than themselves, Boccaccio adds this as an illus-

of precisely this kind to prove that since Martin V inclusive, no Pope has had a valid election. For Martin V was elected in 1417 by twenty-three titular Cardinals, appointed in every case by one of three rival Popes, all of whom had been declared no true Pope at all by the Council of Constance. It formally annulled all the quasi-Papal acts of every one of them. Consequently none of these Cardinals had any right to vote in this election by Roman canon-law, and therefore Martin V was no true Pope, nor, by consequence, any Pope elected since. So at any rate argued Dr. Littledale. It certainly seems to me to be an obvious flaw in such an argument that the actual method of the election of a Pope need not be, and has not always been, the same. The election by the Cardinals alone dates, I believe, from Nicholas II (d. 1061). It cannot therefore be the only possible mode by which, under whatever pressure of exceptional circumstances, a lawful Pope can be created. Kings and dynasties have come to be recognized as legitimate and constitutional, in spite of the throne having been originally reached by very various titles, or methods often very irregular. So might not a Pope *de facto* become under urgent and exceptional conditions a Pope *de jure*? And, after all, what are the irregularities mentioned above compared with some of the haphazard and entirely uncanonical elections even in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, to say nothing of earlier times?

It has been objected to Dr. Dollinger's theory as to the invalidity in Dante's eyes of Boniface's election, that it is inconsistent with the language and attitude of Dante towards Boniface in *Purg. xx. 85 seqq.* But surely the moral guilt of Nogaret and Sciarra was not affected by any such considerations. For them Boniface was 'the Lord's Anointed,' and they outraged and insulted him *as such*, without any thought as to his title being invalid. And Dante was too much both of a Christian and a gentleman not to feel disgust at such brutal treatment, even of his worst enemy.

¹ Pupil of Aquinas, tutor of Philip the Fair (for whom he wrote *De Regimine Principum*), one of the most learned theologians of the thirteenth century, sometimes called 'Doctor fundatissimus.'

² In that treatise (cap. xxiii) he declares that Boniface endeavoured to dissuade Celestine from resigning, and that many were still living who could prove this (*Wiseman, Essays. iii. p. 178*).

tration: 'We see this at present in the case of those who hold that since Celestine there has never been a Pope. Of these more than 600, persevering in this obstinacy, have been burnt.' I have never seen any reference elsewhere to this incident.

It is remarkable that Dante claims the same freedom of judgement in the case of the Emperor, whose office was with him scarcely, if at all, less sacred than that of the Popes. One or two further passages in illustration of this, beyond what has been already said, may be adduced here. The Emperor Henry VII is described as 'the Lord's Anointed'—'He that was to come'—'the exalted offspring of Jesse'¹; and even, in one place, as 'the Lamb of God.' In *De Mon.* III. xvi, Dante declares that 'God alone elects the Emperor, God alone Himself confirms him, since he has none above Him. From this we may further hold that those who are now, or any others whatsoever who may have been, called Electors, ought not to be so called. They are rather to be considered as heralds of God's Providence.' But, for all that, Dante does not hesitate to declare that this sacred Imperial office had also been vacant since the death of Frederic II (1250), i.e. for more than half a century. Not that there had been any actual break in the succession, but because the intermediate Emperors had never visited Italy, nor been crowned at Rome, and had, therefore, in Dante's view (to use a modern phrase) never 'qualified' as Emperors. In default of this condition, which Dante took upon himself to lay down as essential, he hesitates not to pronounce the Imperial throne to be also vacant, even as he had declared the Papal throne to be.

Thus in *Conv.* IV. iii. he speaks of Frederic of Suabia as 'the last Emperor of the Romans—the last, I say, in reference to the present time—notwithstanding that Rudolf and Adolf and Albert have been elected since his death, and that of his offspring.' So, again, in *Par.* iii. 120, Frederic II is described

¹ *Ep.* vii. § 8 *init.* It seems probable that we should read 'proles altera (not *alta*) Isai'; and, if so, the translation should be 'thou second Son of Jesse.' The confusion of *alto* and *altro* is exceedingly common in MSS.

as *ultima possanza*, and in the passionate appeal in *Purg.* vi. to 'Alberto Tedesco,' the 'German Albert'¹, to come and visit Italy, the deserted garden of the Empire, Dante declares that 'la sella è vota'—'the saddle is empty and the horse riderless.' Also in *Purg.* xxxiii. 37 he speaks of the Empire (in 1300) as being 'senza ereda,' and prophesies. (no doubt thinking of Henry VII) that it will not long remain so.

In regard, then, to the first of the points in Dante's teaching selected for examination, he certainly stands in opposition to the theory and practice of the Roman Church both in his day and since down to our own times. He has fallen under her condemnation for this, and under that censure he still remains. But it must always be remembered that this matter stands on a very different footing from a doctrine which is *de fide*. Its 'free handling' may be censurable by the Church, but it is

'non d'eretica nequizia.'

It is also quite another thing from the criticism of doctrines by the later Reformers. Moreover, their attitude in reference to this very question of the supremacy and authority of the Pope had nothing in common with that of Dante, and would certainly have been fiercely denounced by him.

The lengthy treatment of this topic will, it is hoped, be considered to have been justified by the wide-spreading

¹ One is surprised that Dante can ever have entertained any hopes whatever from Albert, for in 1303, in return for a very haughty and contemptuous recognition of his claims by Boniface, this 'one-eyed and intellectually insignificant son of Rudolf' (as Gregorovius terms him) made the most abject submission of all and any of the Imperial claims to the authority of the Pope. He acknowledged that the Empire was transferred from the East to Charles the Great by authority of the Pope; that the right of election was conferred on the Electors by the Pope (contrast *De Mon.* III. xvi. 102 *seqq.*). All kings and emperors in the past or in the future receive the power of the temporal sword from the Pope; that power being thus entrusted to them chiefly for the purpose of defending the Church, &c. He ends by confirming all previous concessions and donations ever made to the Popes, and adds a solemn oath, 'Iuro etiam . . . quod ero fidelis et obediens beato Petro, et vobis et vestris successoribus,' &c. (Raynaldus, *Ann. Eccl. Ann.* 1303, § x). How completely the Empire now lay under the feet of the Church, and what a light such language throws upon the vigorous protests of Dante! With literal truth could he exclaim—

'L' un l' altro ha spento; ed è giunta la spada
Col pastorale.'

(*Purg.* xvi. 109, 110.)

influence which Dante's belief respecting it is seen to have exercised upon his thoughts and writings. Unless this be fully recognized, it is certain that he will often be very imperfectly understood, sometimes entirely misunderstood. To take only one illustration of this, the splendid episode in *Purg.* vi. 76 *seqq.* beginning, 'Ahi serva Italia,' and containing that passionate appeal to the German Albert to come and heal the woes of Italy. How strangely must these words have jarred on modern Italian ears not long ago, or indeed on those of any one who should read them out of relation to that politico-religious creed of their author which has here been expounded! Apart from this, they might seem little better than the petulant ravings of a disappointed politician. But, viewed in this light, they are seen to be the 'exceeding bitter cry' of a religious enthusiast, convinced in his inmost heart that 'all the foundations of the earth are out of course': one who, in the spirit of an old Hebrew prophet, calls upon 'the Lord's Anointed' to take up 'the Lord's controversy,' and to 'come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.'

II. The next point suggested, viz. the teaching of Dante as to the authority of Scripture, need not detain us long, since little or no controversy would arise on this point between Dante and either Roman Catholic or Protestant theologians. Dante's knowledge of the Bible from end to end is extraordinarily thorough, and his reverence for it is as great as his knowledge. He quotes or refers to it fully five hundred times in his various works, as will be found in the Index to the former volume of these Studies. To illustrate his feeling respecting the supreme and unassailable authority of Scripture one or two passages must suffice. In *De Mon.* III. iv, after quoting S. Augustine's words—'Faith will totter if the authority of the Divine Scriptures be shaken,' Dante breaks out thus against those who wilfully pervert or misuse Scripture—'O worst of crimes, even though a man commit it in his dreams, to turn to ill use the purpose of the Eternal Spirit. Such an one does not sin against Moses, or David, or Job, or Matthew, or Paul, but against the

Eternal Spirit that speaketh in them. For though the reporters of the words of God are many, yet there is one only that tells them what to write, even God, who has deigned to unfold to us His will through the pens of many writers¹. Again, in *Par.* v. 76, we read:—'(Christians) . . . ye have the Old and the New Testament and the Pastor of the Church to guide you, let this suffice for your salvation.' In *Par.* xxix. 83–93 Beatrice is represented as describing very scornfully the manifold aberrations, uncertainties, and contradictions of human systems of philosophy. (One is reminded of the language of Wordsworth on the same subject:—'Oh! there is laughter at their work in heaven.') After this she adds:—'All this however is regarded on high with less indignation than the neglect or perversion of Holy Scripture. Men forget what it cost to plant it in the world, and how pleasing is he who humbly submits himself to it².'

Only two further remarks suggest themselves under this head:—

(1) The same unquestioning deference is rendered by Dante not only to the actual language of Scripture, not only to 'whatsoever may be read therein,' but also to all 'that may be proved thereby' with the help of the extraordinary latitude of moral, mystical, and allegorical interpretations recognized as valid in his day. These were sometimes regarded, as Dante himself says when expounding and illustrating them in the *Convito*, as being even 'more true' than the literal sense³. Hence the most fanciful applications of Scripture are regarded as logically valid, and, by necessary consequence, as sharing in the authority of the original text. One may see this in many of the astonishingly inconsequent arguments of the *De Monarchia*.

(2) But while Dante speaks thus clearly and decidedly (as he does also in other places) of the supreme authority

¹ From Church's Translation.

² See other passages referred to in the first series of these *Studies*, p. 47.

³ See *Conv.* II. xiii *init.*: 'Poichè la *litterale* sentenza è sufficientemente dimostrata, è da procedere alla sposizione *allegorica e vera*.'

of Holy Scripture, he by no means limits the term 'inspiration' or 'the inspiration of the Holy Spirit' to the books of the Bible. God has certainly not 'left himself without witness' either in the later ages of the Church itself, or even in the heathen world outside. There is a remarkable passage in the *De Monarchia*, III. iii. 72, in which Dante maintains that the inspiration of the Bible, though differing in degree, does not altogether differ in kind from that of many other books, which may also claim to be *θεόπνευστοι*. In that passage he makes a curious division of three classes of 'Scriptura.' (1) Ante Ecclesiam; (2) cum Ecclesia; (3) post Ecclesiam. The first division stands supreme above the others, and includes the writings of the Old Testament and New Testament. The second embraces the decrees of General Councils (*Concilia principalia*), in which Christ was undoubtedly present 'according to His most true promise.' Also the writings of many Doctors, and notably of S. Augustine, who, we cannot doubt, were aided by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In the third class are the traditions of the Church and in particular the Decretals, which, though venerable from their Apostolic authority—for the question of their forgery (we must remember) had not yet been suggested—are to be placed on an altogether lower level than Holy Scripture. How very far inferior may be gathered from an extremely caustic passage at the end of *Par.* ix. 'Owing to this (viz. Covetousness and Avarice) the Gospel and the great Doctors are neglected and only the Decretals are studied, so that it is evident on their margins. On this the Pope and the Cardinals are intent. Their thoughts go not to Nazareth, there where Gabriel spread his wings. But the Vatican and the other chosen parts of Rome, which have been a burial-place for the soldiery that followed Peter, shall soon be set free from their adultery.' The 'adultery' being, as the previous context shows, Avarice (just as the word is used in *Inf.* xix. 4), and the allusion is to the removal of the Papal Court from Rome to Avignon, which took place four or five years after the assumed date of this 'prophecy.' Again, in his letter to the Cardinals, *Ep.* viii. § 7, addressing the Church, 'Sponsa

Christi,' he says—'Thy Gregory lies covered with cobwebs. Ambrose lies among the neglected cupboards of the clergy. So lies Augustine. Dionysius, Damascene, and Bede are tossed aside. They declaim the "Speculum" as they call it, Innocent, and him of Ostia. And why? The former writers were seekers after God, as the end and the chief good. These hunt after incomes and benefices.'

In the authority thus attributed to Councils and the patristic writings, we note that the teaching of Dante accords much more with that of the Catholic Church, both before and after the Reformation, than with the spirit of what is commonly known as 'Protestant' theology. When we add to this Dante's acknowledgment of divine assistance given to the best among heathen writers also, we cannot but admire, especially in that age, so frank a recognition of the truth that 'God fulfils himself in many ways,' and such a reverent and truly practical application of the teaching of S. Paul that 'all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit,' whatever may be the 'diversities of operations.'

III. The teaching of Dante as to the possibility of salvation for the heathen who, in ancient or later times, were necessarily cut off from fellowship with the Catholic Church.—The large-hearted view of God's dealings with the ancient heathen world, expressed by Dante in passages adduced in the previous pages, might lead us to expect a high level of enlightened charity and hope in his pronouncements as to their future destiny. But this is not consistently the case. He often seems to 'falter where he firmly stood,' and to be quite unable to emancipate himself from the fetters of the rigid and formal orthodoxy of his age. With infinite sadness, and yet with inflexible firmness, Dante closes the gate of Heaven to all the virtuous heathen with three very curious and anomalous exceptions, and to all, at any time, however virtuous, who have not received Baptism. In the beautiful description of Limbo, in *Inf.* iv, there were 'no lamentations, but only sighs with which the eternal air seemed to tremble. These came from the sorrow yet without pain (*duol senza martiri*) that the multitudes endured, which were vast and

numerous, of infants, and of women, and of men.' 'These,' adds Virgil, 'did not sin (i.e. obviously in the sense of S. John ix. 3), and if they had merits it avails them not, because they were not baptized . . . and if they were before Christianity (and, therefore, before the institution of Baptism), they did not worship God aright (i.e. according to the Jewish Revelation), and among these same am I myself. For these defects and for no other guilt are we lost, and we are only so far afflicted that we live in desire without hope.' With infinite sadness must Dante have penned these pathetic lines. It is strange, indeed, that he should have treated this anguish of fruitless hope, of noble aspirations doomed to eternal disappointment, as a lighter penalty than mere physical pain. But let that pass. For in any case he does but follow the teaching and almost the language of Aquinas on this subject, who declares that in Limbo there is no 'poena sensibilis, solum poena damni,' i.e. no positive pain of sense, but only the negative pain of loss¹. How heavily this thought of the inevitable fate of the virtuous heathen weighed upon the mind of Dante we see again from *Purg.* iii. 34 *seqq.* Virgil there warns Dante of the presumptuous folly of supposing that any human intellect can of itself understand Divine mysteries. 'Had this been possible,' says Virgil, 'the Incarnation would have been unnecessary.' 'You have yourself seen,' he continues,—referring to the great spirits in Limbo—'you have yourself seen those in fruitless desire, whose desires would have been satisfied if human intellect of itself could have achieved such knowledge. I speak of Aristotle, and of Plato, and of many others. And here he bowed his head, and said no more, and remained troubled.' Once more this sad subject is touched upon in *Purg.* xxii. 55-93. From some motive, not yet perhaps sufficiently explained, Dante saves the Roman poet Statius, feigning him to have been a Christian

¹ It must be remembered that the sense of loss to those who *ex hypothesi* have not known God is not like that of those who have known Him and lost Him; 'Ch' hanno *perduto* il ben dell' intelletto' (*Inf.* iii. 18). *These* know what they have lost; those in Limbo are spared that, perhaps the highest, aggravation of the suffering of Hell.

secretly, having been converted and baptized, though afraid to confess it, on account of the persecutions of Domitian. Statius declares his conversion to have been brought about by the language of Virgil in the celebrated fourth Eclogue, in which it has often been thought that Virgil—

‘Pious beyond the intention of his thought,
Devout beyond the meaning of his will’—

was inspired to prophesy of Christ. ‘Through thee—says Statius, addressing Virgil—I became a poet, through thee a Christian. Thou hast done like one who walks by night, and carries a light behind him. He profits not himself, but enlightens those that come after him.’

Yet there are passages in which Dante seems to rise with happy inconsistency above this narrowness of contemporary belief. Among rulers who have ‘wrought righteousness’ and are exalted in Paradise, we find the Roman Emperor Trajan, and the Trojan Rhipeus, ‘iustissimus unus . . . et servantissimus aequi’ (*Aen.* ii. 427). Both of them, Dante declares, left their bodies not as Gentiles but as Christians, in firm faith in Him that had suffered or was yet to suffer (*Par.* xx. 103). Trajan was saved by a special miracle, according to a legend which was adopted also by S. Thomas Aquinas, viz. that through the earnest prayers of S. Gregory, stimulated by the incident of Trajan’s great humility, which is so beautifully depicted by Dante in *Purg.* x. 73 *seqq.*, Trajan was for a short time restored to his body, and then, having accepted Christianity, again died¹. This legend is the more

¹ The story of the deliverance of Trajan is fully accepted by S. Thomas Aquinas, though he expresses some doubt as to the exact explanation of it in detail. His chief interest in it is to show that it does not hence follow that we may pray for those in Hell, since the case of Trajan is as much exceptional as that of those who were miraculously raised from the dead, ‘quorum plures constat idolatras et damnatos fuisse.’ In consequence of the Divine foreknowledge of their exceptional restoration, they were not ‘finaliter in inferno.’ (See *Summa*, Suppl. Q. 71, Art. 5.) The question is also discussed in the *Legenda Aurea*, c. 46: ‘Traianus non erat in inferno finaliter deputatus nec sententia definitiva damnatus. Alii dixerunt quod anima Traiani non fuit simpliciter a reatu poenae aeternae absoluta, sed eius poena usque ad tempus, scilicet usque ad diem iudicii, fuit suspensa.’ These words are quoted directly from the *Summa*, l. c., where they form one of the alternative explanations offered by S. Thomas. Other explanations of the perplexing incident are also suggested.

remarkable because Trajan was a fierce persecutor of the Christians. The salvation of Rhipeus is an idea of Dante's own, suggested probably by Virgil's description of him in the line above quoted. Dante justifies it by a principle which, if once recognized, might surely be applied more widely, and one, moreover, for which he might have claimed also the authority of S. Thomas, who declares more than once that God never suffers any man to want what is necessary to salvation, if he only earnestly desires it. The mind of Rhipeus, says Dante, was so bent upon righteousness that God led him on from grace to grace till his eyes were opened to our future redemption, and he believed in that and abjured paganism thereafter. Those three maidens whom Dante had seen at the right hand of the triumphal car of Beatrice, viz. Faith, Hope, and Charity, were for him *instead of Baptism*, more than a thousand years before Baptism was (*Par.* xx. 127)¹. It is strange, indeed, that Dante should not have extended to any other cases a doctrine so full of healing comfort. Another striking passage occurs in *Par.* xix. 103 *seqq.*—'To this realm never has any one ascended who did not believe in Christ²; *either before or after* He was nailed to the tree. But look you, many cry Christ, Christ, who shall be in the judgement much less near to Him than one who has not known Christ. And

¹ The following passage may be compared with this from S. Augustine, *Quaest. in Leviticum*, 84. He is there speaking of 'invisibilis sanctificatio' in contrast with 'visibilia sacramenta.' Without the former, the latter do not profit (e.g. Simon Magus). Without the latter, the former may be conveyed (e.g. S. John Baptist and the Penitent Thief). 'Proinde colligitur invisibilem sanctificationem quibusdam affuisse atque profuisse sine visibilibus sacramentis, quae pro temporum diversitate mutata sunt, ut alia tunc fuerint, alia modo sint.' S. Augustine is here speaking in reference to the consecration of Priests under the Mosaic dispensation. He does not go on to apply this principle (as Dante does in the case of Rhipeus) to any outside both the Jewish and Christian dispensations. A closer parallel to the passage in Dante may perhaps be found in the *Summa*, iii. Q. 66, Art. 11: 'Aliquis per virtutem Spiritus sancti consequitur effectum baptismi: non solum sine baptismo aquae, sed etiam sine baptismo sanguinis [i.e. Martyrdom]: in quantum scilicet alicuius cor per Spiritum sanctum movetur ad credendum, et diligendum Deum, et paenitentium de peccatis.' This seems to cover the case of Rhipeus as imagined by Dante.

² So Aquinas, *Super Libb. Sentt., Scriptum 2^{um}*, iii. Dist. 25, Art. 2: 'Sine fide Christi explicita vel implicita nullus unquam potuit salvari.'

such Christians shall be condemned by the Ethiopian when the two companies shall be parted asunder, the one for ever rich and the other poor.' It does not seem to follow that even here Dante holds out the hope of salvation to the Ethiopian, but only that he will be 'beaten with fewer stripes' than the unfaithful Christian. In fact, he only says that he will 'condemn the Christian,' just as our Lord says that the men of Nineveh would rise up in condemnation of the Jews who refused to believe in Him. Here, again, is a similar passage from the *De Monarchia*. Dante there speaks of those who 'antecedently to the traditions of the Church have believed on Christ the Son of God, whether *to come*¹ (note these words), or as present, or as having suffered, who from their faith have hoped, and from their hope have kindled into love, and who, burning with love, will, the world doubts not, be made co-heirs with Him¹.' But it seems probable from the context here that Dante is speaking not of heathen, but of those who had the light of the Old Testament. Yet even of these none were actually saved, as we learn distinctly from *Inf.* iv. 62-63, until after the passion of our Lord and His 'preaching to the spirits in prison.'

But against these passages, which seem, but perhaps only seem, to hold out some hope to the virtuous heathen, we must set others in which the door of hope is very firmly closed. In *De Mon.* II. viii. 28 *seqq.* we read: 'No one, however perfect he may be in moral and intellectual virtues, both in habit and in action, can be saved without faith, it being supposed that he never heard of Christ.' This is given by Dante as an example of a 'judgement of God,

¹ *De Mon.* III. iii. 63-69. Cf. also *Par.* xx. 105—

'in ferma fede,

Quel dei passuri e quel dei passi piedi.'

We might compare with this the statement of S. Thomas—'Antiqui patres habebant fidem de passione Christi futura . . . sed nos habemus fidem de passione Christi praecedenti' (*Summa*, iii. Q. 62, Art. 6. 1). Comp. i. 2^{da} Q. 98, Art. 2. 4. Again, he uses the expression 'de Christo venturo quodammodo habens velatam cognitionem' (ii. 2^{da} Q. 2, Art. 7). Also (*l.c.*) . . . 'ideo mysterium incarnationis Christi aliquantulum oportuit omni tempore esse creditum apud omnes.' Once more, in iii. Q. 68, Art. 1, 'Ante adventum Christi homines Christo incorporabantur per fidem futuri adventus, cuius rei signaculum erat circumcisio.'

which cannot be seen to be just by human reason, yet by faith it can be.' Again, in *Par.* xix. 70, he puts the case of one 'born on the banks of the Indus, where there is no one who can tell or read or write about Christ. His wishes, his words, his acts, his life, are faultless, as far as human reason can discern, but he dies unbaptized and without faith. Where is the justice, Dante boldly asks, of condemning him? How is it his fault if he does not believe?' But the answer he gives is, in effect, to crush such presumptuous questionings, as in the Book of Job, or the Epistle to the Romans¹, with the rebuke 'Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?' So again, finally, in *Par.* xxxii. 76-84², Dante, speaking by the mouth of S. Bernard, declares that, in the earliest ages of the world, infants were saved solely by the virtue of their parents' faith. Afterwards, at least for males, circumcision became a necessary condition. But after the time of grace, without 'battesmo perfetto di Cristo,' all, however innocent, must perforce remain below. These distinctions, and in some cases almost the very words, are borrowed from Aquinas. It is remarkable that S. Bernard's own writings express a less stern decision than that which is here put into his mouth by Dante.

The contrast between some of the passages that have been quoted may remind us of the warning given by Wordsworth:—

'Tis the most difficult of tasks to keep,
Heights which the soul is competent to gain.'

In Dante's varying and inconsistent utterances on this subject, he seems like a bird vainly beating its wings against the bars of its cage. It is almost painful to witness his spasmodic efforts from time to time to free himself from the fetters of prescribed doctrine which he dared not break outright.

¹ See Job xxxiii. 12, 13; Rom. ix. 20.

² All this comes almost *verbatim* from Aquinas. See especially *Summa*, iii. Q. 70, Art. 2, Concl. 4, and Art. 4, Concl. 2. In the former passage he explains the limitation 'ai maschi' in this singular manner:—'Convenienter solis maribus competeat: peccatum enim originale, contra quod specialiter circumcisio ordinatur, a patre trahitur non a matre!' See further, iii. Q. 68, Art. 1, quoted *supra*, p. 41, note.

IV. We pass now to Dante's teaching on the subject of Purgatory.

Dante's conception of the nature and purpose of the pains of Purgatory stands in very marked contrast to the popular ideas of the Middle Ages, and not only to the popular ideas, but also to the teaching and practice of the Roman Church both then and in later times. It is not asserted that no parallel to Dante's pure and elevated conception is to be found in special passages of the most spiritual writers, but I know of none by whom such an elevation has been maintained consistently, and without admixture of much that our Church would describe as 'corrupt following of the Apostles.' In any case his teaching is undoubtedly on a far higher level than vulgar beliefs which the Church took very little pains to elevate, and from which, in some of the darker periods of her history, she has often been willing to profit. This difference of attitude on the part of Dante applies not only to the general conception of Purgatory itself, but still more strikingly to the practical consequences flowing from it, in teachings respecting indulgences, transference of merits, and means of remission of, or escape from, Purgatorial penalties. Of all this there is no trace in the system of Dante. There is no open protest (such as we find in the case of the later Reformers, and in Dante's own language respecting the claim to Temporal Dominion) against teaching which we feel sure from the general tone of his writings he must have entirely repudiated. But such doctrines are, as we shall see, conspicuous by their absence; they are studiously, we might almost say obtrusively, ignored by Dante. I think, therefore, that the language used, *supra* p. 13, still holds good, since there is here no formal or open protest against any of the teachings of the Church.

Now the purpose of Purgatory may, I suppose, be confidently described as twofold. First, the purifying of the imperfectly cleansed soul, which *could* not appear in the presence of God till wholly purged from stain of sin, and until the rebel Will is brought into complete harmony with that of God: secondly, the payment 'to the uttermost

farthing' of the *temporal* penalty incurred to the Justice of God by sin¹, the *eternal* penalty having been already remitted by the Mercy of God. Thus a well-known writer² says: 'Two things and two only shut the gates of Paradise against a soul. The one is its own unworthiness, and the other the temporal debt which it may have to pay to God's inexorable Justice.' He proceeds to point out that the Church has power to deal with and to relieve from both of these impediments, the former by the power to *absolve*, the latter by the power to *indulge*³.

¹ See S. Aug. *Enarr. in Psalm.* l. § 7: 'Implora misericordiam, sed attende iustitiam: misericordia est ut ignoscat peccanti, iustitia est ut puniat peccatum. Quid ergo? Quaeris misericordiam? peccatum impunitum remanebit? . . . Non, Domine, non erit impunitum peccatum meum: novi iustitiam eius, cuius quaero misericordiam: non impunitum erit, sed ideo nolo ut tu me punias, quia ego peccatum meum punio.' See further, *De Civ. Dei*, bk. xxi. c. 13 and 14. Also Aquinas, *Summa*, i. 2^{ae} Q. 87, Art. 6: 'Cessante actu peccati remanet reatus in omnibus peccatis actualibus: actus enim peccati facit hominem reum poenae, in quantum transgreditur ordinem divinae iustitiae, ad quem non redit nisi per quandam recompensationem poenae, quae ad aequalitatem iustitiae reducit. . . . Cessante actu peccati . . . adhuc remanet debitum poenae.' Then he clearly recognizes the twofold necessity for 'Purificatio' as well as 'Satisfactio'—'Manifestum est quod macula peccati ab anima auferri non potest, nisi per hoc quod anima cum Deo coniungitur . . . Coniungitur autem Deo homo per voluntatem, unde macula peccati ab homine tolli non potest, nisi voluntas hominis ordinem divinae iustitiae acceptet, ut scilicet vel ipse sibi poenam spontaneus assumat in recompensationem culpae praeteritae, vel ipsam a Deo illatam patienter sustineat.' (Almost every word of this is echoed in the *Purgatorio* of Dante.) Then returning again to the question of 'Satisfactio':—'Dicendum est ergo quod remota macula culpae (i.e. by 'Purificatio') potest quidem remanere reatus non poenae simpliciter, sed *satisfactoriae*.' This is also very clearly expressed by Perrone in his *Tractatus de Paenitentia*, cap. iv. § 183: 'Satisfactio inservit ad eam poenae temporalis partem remittendam, quae plerumque remanet post sacramentum [sc. paenitentiae] persolvenda sive in hac sive in altera vita. Est autem Satisfactio, Compensatio iniuriae Deo nostris peccatis illatae.'

² Lépicier, *On Indulgences*, p. 71.

³ Lépicier (*op. cit.* p. 83) defines an Indulgence as 'the remission granted by the Church, but ratified by God, of a debt of temporal punishment.' Again (p. 54) 'Indulgence is condonation of a debt which the sinner has contracted . . . and which he has still to pay when he has obtained remission of his sins; which condonation is made by the application of superabundant merits' (from the Treasury of the Church, as explained elsewhere). It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that 'temporal punishment' must not be understood as limited to 'canonical penance,' beyond which Luther denied the efficacy

There is no reason whatever to doubt that Dante would fully recognize this twofold purpose assigned by the Church to Purgatory, viz. Purification and Satisfaction. But it is a very striking point, that, entirely reversing the ordinary practice¹, he puts the former into constant and supreme prominence, while the latter is kept almost entirely in the background. No doubt this is due to the flagrant abuses already prevalent in connexion with Indulgences, which were intimately connected with the latter aspect of Purgatory. As to the actual doctrine or practice of Indulgences, I do not remember that Dante refers to it except to protest against abuses of this kind. Thus in *Par.* xxvii. 52, 53, he makes S. Peter blush at the 'privilegi venduti e mendaci' to which his seal is attached, and in *Par.* xxix. 124-126 there is a very bitter allusion to the profitable trade driven by the pig of S. Antony and others (i.e. his masters) 'who are much more pigs themselves,' 'pagando di moneta senza conio².' This silence on the

of Indulgences to extend. This is clear from the usual form in which an Indulgence is granted:—'remittimus de paenitentiiis *iniunctis* . . . dies, vel *alias* quomodolibet debitis paenitentiiis.' (See further, *op. cit.* pp. 55, 57, 213.) Another well-known authority, Perrone, in his *Tractatus de Indulgentiis, sub init.*, thus formally defines *Indulgentia*, 'Remissio poenae temporalis adhuc post remissam culpam et poenam aeternam peccatis debita.' A little later, § 5, he asserts 'has indulgentias applicari posse animabus in Purgatorio detentis.'

¹ In all such authorities as I have been able to consult little or nothing is ever said about the Purificatory aspect of Purgatory, but only about its affording an opportunity for discharging the debt due of temporal punishment.

² Compare with this the scathing passage in *The Vision of Piers Plowman*, Text A, *Prolog.* ll. 55-76. He also does not censure the Church for this but the Bishop who permits it; and again *Pass.* III. ll. 36-54, the shriving of Meed (Bribery) by a Confessor on very base conditions. Contrast the 'Pardon' of Piers (*Pass.* VIII. ll. 95 *seqq.*) consisting of two lines—

'Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam eternam,
Qui vero mala, in ignem eternum.'

The priest who sees this says it is no Pardon at all, and rejects it as worthless. But the writer (ll. 153 *seqq.*) says that he often thinks many a time at midnight, when men should sleep, on Piers the Plowman,

'And whuch a pardoun he hedde,
And hou the preost impugneded hit, al bi pure Resoun,
And divinede that Dowel ('Do-well') Indulgence passede
Bienals and Trienals and Busschopes lettres.
Dowel on Domesday is digneliche I-preiset,
He passeth al the pardouns of seint Petrus church.'

What follows may be thus paraphrased:—'The Pope, I loyally believe, can

subject of Indulgences is the more significant when we remember two points:—

1. The fact that early in the fourteenth century the development of the theory of Indulgences was creating such enthusiasm that, in the language of a recent writer¹, it was as though the Church were leading 'another crusade for the object of emancipating that part of the race which was suffering in Purgatory.'

2. The very explicit and dogmatic pronouncements of S. Thomas Aquinas on this subject, with which Dante could not fail to be acquainted. I cannot for a moment conceive that the author of the *Purgatorio* could accept any one of the three propositions in which S. Thomas summarizes his teaching on this subject, given in the note below². The writer quoted above expresses himself very strongly when he says that in respect of the doctrine of Indulgences Dante would be 'in downright opposition to the temper of the age,

grant pardon, and prayers can save souls that have sinned. But to trust to Triennials is not safe for the soul. Ye wealthy men who purchase pardons and Pope's Bulls, at the dread day of doom the doom will rehearse how thou leddest thy life, what thou did'st day by day. A pokeful of Pardons there with Provincials' letters, though thou be found in Fraternity with the four orders, and have Indulgences doubled—unless "Do-well" help thee, I would not give a pie-crust for thy chance of pardon.' The whole spirit of the poem³ reminds us constantly of the pure and earnest teaching of Dante, evincing a full trust in the Church while freely denouncing her corruptions and abuses. The reader may compare with this the savage satire called 'The Complaint of the Plowman,' printed in Wright, *Political Songs*, i. pp. 304 *seqq.*

¹ From a paper by Dr. A. V. G. Allen, Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Cambridge, U. S. A. in *The Expository Times*.

² See *Summa*, Suppl. Q. 25, Art. 1, where Aquinas states—

(i) Remissio quae per indulgentias fit, non tollit quantitatem poenae ad culpam; quia *pro culpa unius alius sponte poenam sustinuit*.

(ii) Ille qui indulgentias suscipit non absolvitur, simpliciter loquendo, a debito poenae, sed *datur sibi unde debitum solvat*.

(iii) . . . *faciens indulgentias solvit poenam pro eo quam debuit, de bonis Ecclesiae communibus*.

(These 'bona communia' have been explained in the body of the Article to be the superabundant merits of Saints, but above all of Christ, 'quorum meritorum tanta est copia quod omnem poenam debitam nunc viventibus excedunt.')

It ought to be noted that S. Thomas adds that 'ex affectu quem accipiens indulgentiam concipit ad causam pro qua indulgentia datur, *ad gratiam disponitur*; ideo etiam, per indulgentias remedium ad peccata vitanda datur.'

and the attitude of the Church,' but if 'attitude' here be limited to the *practices* permitted and encouraged, and further even inculcated by prominent individual teachers, I do not think it goes beyond the truth. The Council of Trent with its authoritative decisions and definitions was still in the future.

There is a point (which has hardly I think been noted) in the symbolism of the three steps of the Gate of Purgatory in Canto ix. 94-102, which seems to me very noteworthy in this connexion. It can hardly be doubted that the white marble—'sì pulito e terso, Ch'io mi specchiai in esso quale io paio'—represents candid *Confession*; the dark and calcined stone cracked in all directions, broken-hearted *Contrition*; and the flaming red porphyry, burning *Love*. Here then we have Confession, Contrition, Love, as the three successive steps in Penance. But the remarkable point is that Scholastic and other Church writers uniformly give the three steps in the Sacrament of Penance as Contrition, Confession, *Satisfaction*; or thus—*Contritio cordis*; *Confessio oris*; *Satisfactio operis*, as we find in *Summa*, iii. Q. 90, Art. 2. So Peter Lombard; and also Pope Innocent III, who interprets the triple beating of the breast as having reference to these three grades. The same three parts of Penance are found in Chaucer, 'The Persones Tale,' and again in Cardinal Perrone, *Tractatus de Paenitentia*. Now surely Dante not without purpose substituted 'Love' for 'Satisfaction' as the third step, not indeed denying the latter, but bringing into prominence the fact that—

'foco d' amor *compia* in un punto
Ciò che dee satisfar chi qui s' astalla': (*Purg.* vi. 38, 39)

and also that 'sins which were many were forgiven to one that *loved much*' (Luke vii. 47). In other words, he associates 'Satisfaction' more with the inward condition of heart than with outward acts.

But, though Dante keeps this aspect of penal satisfaction in Purgatory (as I have said) almost entirely in the background, there is no reason to suppose that he would deny that the temporal penal consequences of sin must work themselves out, like the inevitable consequences of the violation of any of the

laws of Nature. This appears from such a passage as *Purg.* xi. 70-72 :—

‘E qui convien ch’ io questo peso porti
Per lei (*sc.* Superbia), tanto che a Dio si satisfaccia,
Poi ch’ io nol fei tra’ vivi, qui tra’ morti.’

To this we might possibly add *Purg.* xix. 125 :—

‘E quanto fia piacer del giusto Sire,
Tanto staremo immobili e distesi¹.’

At the same time these passages do not *necessarily* go beyond the satisfaction of God at the *purifying* process being gradually accomplished. Still, in view of the teaching of Augustine, Aquinas, and the Church generally, and the absence of any expression of dissent therefrom on the part of Dante, there seems no reason whatever to suppose that he would not admit the need of ‘Satisfaction’ in the ordinary sense. Yet the almost complete suppression of any allusion to it is very remarkable, and one cannot but think that it was prompted by the considerations already indicated.

But illustrations of the other aspect of Purgatory not only occur by scores, but they are wrought into the very texture of the whole poem. Among many other passages, see *Purg.* xvi. 31, 32 :—

‘O creatura, che ti mondi,
Per tornar bella a colui che ti fece.’

Ib. xi. 34 :—

‘Ben si dee loro aitar lavar le note,
Che portar quinci, sì che mondi e lievi
Possano uscire alle stellate rote².’

In short, Dante generally seems to regard this as almost exclusively the aspect of Purgatorial pains, though he does not formally deny the other.

In accordance with this fundamental conception, there is no trace in Dante of any arbitrary or vindictive punishment in Purgatory. No one can fail to feel the difference—even when they resemble in some of the details inflicted—between the punishments in Hell and those in what Milton has beautifully

¹ Possibly also *Purg.* xi. 125, 6; xxvi. 147.

² Add further *Purg.* iv. 91-95, xiii. 88-90, xvii. 85-87, &c.

described as 'the milder shades of Purgatory.' As Mr. Ruskin has expressed it:—In Purgatory it is no longer a question as to 'what the sinner has done, but only what evil feeling is still in his heart, or what good, when purified, his nature is noble enough to receive.' The whole purpose of the punishment seems to be to enable the sufferer to eradicate and conquer what S. Paul calls 'the motions of sin'; to acquire that 'holiness without which no man can see the Lord,' and to subjugate completely the rebel Will: that Will, which, as Tennyson finely says,

'Ever weaker grows through acted crime.'

Not only are the punishments in Purgatory appropriate in kind for this object—there is never anything degrading, grotesque, or insulting about them, as is often the case in the *Inferno*—but besides the punishment there are provided on each *Cornice* subjects for constant meditation by day and by night, both of the virtue to be acquired and the vice to be eradicated. The instant this purpose is accomplished the soul is set free, and there is joy over the whole realm of Purgatory at its liberation. The time required in each case, until 'infectum eluitur scelus,' may be long or short, but that is its absolute limit, neither more nor less¹. Thus Dante imagines Statius to have expiated the sin of Accidia, or spiritual sloth, for four centuries, and that of Avarice for five centuries more (see *Purg.* xxi. 67; xxii. 92); and the Alighieri, who was the great-grandfather of Dante, from whom was derived the name of his family, had been more than one hundred years on the *Cornice* of Pride (see *Par.* xv. 92).

The following is a most instructive passage in illustration of this strict limitation of the period of punishment, and of the indication when its limit has been reached. It occurs in *Purg.* xxi. 61 *seqq.*, and its language deserves thoughtful study:—'That the purification is complete the *Will alone* gives proof [the word used is *voler*], which, when wholly free to change its abode, seizes upon the soul, and the soul then

¹ So again Aquinas, *Summa*, Suppl. Q. 100, Art. 8, Concl. 2: 'diuturnitas (poenae) respondit radicationi culpae in subiecto.'

rejoices so to will. Before that, it wills indeed, but the desire [the word now is *talento*] suffers it not, which (desire) Divine justice, in opposition to the will, sets towards the torment, as it was formerly (i.e. in this life) set towards the sin.' The distinction here intended between *voler* and *talento* is a familiar one, though the terms used may vary. Thus, in sickness we will or wish for (*voler*) health as an end, but our present and immediate desire (*talento*) is for the remedial means, painful though they may be, which we know to be necessary before that end can be realized¹. Similarly, the penitent soul has always in one sense 'a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord,' but as it knows this to be impossible, except on condition of first undergoing the purifying pain², its present desire (called by Aquinas *voluntas conditionata*)³ is to welcome that remedial pain. When at last the soul is conscious that it is entirely pure and free, and that no barrier any longer stands between itself and God, then it gives itself, as it were, the signal for its own release.

It follows naturally from this that, in the view of Dante, admission to Purgatory was a privilege to be prayed for, not a condemnation to be escaped from: and this, no doubt, would be admitted, in theory, by the Roman Church, though, in practice, we hear much more of the latter aspect. The spirits eagerly welcome the boon of the corrective discipline. They are 'contenti nel fuoco.' Some grudge the interruption of their sufferings even for the few moments spent in conversing with Dante, and they apologize for the curtness of their answers to him on this ground (*Purg.* xviii. 115-117). Others, in the purifying furnace of the last *Cornice*, moved towards him 'as much as they could, only being careful not to go where they would be out of reach of the burning' (*Purg.* xxvi. 13-15)⁴.

¹ Compare *βούλησις* and *προαίρεσις* as distinguished in *Nic. Eth.* III. ii. 9.

² Compare George Herbert:—

'Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.'

³ In Suppl. Q. 100, Art. 4: 'Animae quae purgantur habent voluntatem conditionatam suarum poenarum, quatenus sciunt sese sine illis non venturos ad beatitudinem.'

⁴ Add *Purg.* xvi. 34, 141-3; xix. 140.

Another, having referred to his sufferings as 'pena,' immediately 'withdraws' the expression, and substitutes 'sollazzo':—

'si rinfresca nostra pena;
Io dico pena, e dovrei dir sollazzo.' (*Purg.* xxiii. 71, 2.)

This conception of Purgatory is entirely inconsistent with the belief in any arbitrary or mechanical means of procuring release from it. It implies a fundamentally different idea of its nature and purpose. In this, at any rate, Dante would have been likely to agree with the vigorous protest of Luther, in one of his celebrated theses nailed on the door of the church at Wittenberg:—'If God has thought fit to place a man in Purgatory, who shall say that it is good for him to be taken out of it? Who shall even say that he himself desires it?' To quote from a very different source, the following striking passage from the writings of S. Catharine of Genoa seems to express very forcibly Dante's conception of the Purgatorial state. 'I do not believe,' says S. Catharine, 'that it would be possible to find any joy comparable to that of a soul in Purgatory, except the joy of the blessed in Paradise; a joy which goes on increasing from day to day as God flows in more and more upon the soul. . . . On the other hand, they suffer pains so great that no tongue can describe them¹. Every word of this might be illustrated by passages from the *Purgatorio* of Dante, in which (as Carlyle has expressed it) 'hope has dawned, never-dying hope, if in company with heavy sorrow.'

But it will perhaps be said, surely in the *Purgatorio* we have numerous instances in which the spirits in Purgatory ask for the prayers of their friends on earth to obtain a mitigation of their sufferings. Never (in my belief) is there a single instance of this. This is a point deserving particular attention, as it is one which does not seem yet to have been sufficiently recognized, and it is certainly one on which much misconception commonly prevails. It is to be remembered that, in the first eight cantos of the *Purgatorio*, Dante is still

¹ From Hettinger, *op. cit.* p. 151 n. So Aquinas, *Summa*, Suppl. Q. 100, Art. 3: 'Poena purgatorii excedit omnem poenam temporalem huius vitae.'

in *Ante-Purgatory*, and that he does not pass the gate of Purgatory itself till the ninth canto. Further, in *Ante-Purgatory* are detained the spirits of those who, from various causes (four such classes being specially distinguished), have put off repentance till the moment of death. This neglect is *punished by exclusion from Purgatory* for periods of various length. This punishment, be it observed, unlike that of Purgatory itself, is *penal*, not *purgative*, and therefore it may be mitigated or reduced¹. *These*, then, are the spirits who entreat for the prayers of their friends on earth, in order that they may be *more speedily admitted to Purgatory*. There are at least five such cases. One only will suffice here as a sample, viz. v. 72: 'I pray thee that thou wouldest be so courteous of thy entreaties at Fano, that they may indeed offer supplications for me that I may be able to purge me of my grievous offences'; in other words, that I may be allowed to *enter* Purgatory. (Other cases will be found in iii. 141; iv. 133; vi. 27; viii. 71.) In *Purg.* xiii. 124-129 Sapia declares that she had been helped more speedily *into* Purgatory by the prayers of the pious hermit Pier Pettinagno. The same result had been secured by Provenzan Salvani himself by one heroic act of self-humiliation. See xi. 127-142: 'Quest' opera gli tolse quei confini.' Add also xi. 130. So it is always. The gate of Purgatory once passed, there is not to be found, I believe, one single instance of any request for the remission or abbreviation of the penalty², except *indirectly* in the sense explained on the next page. Dante would assuredly have felt the force of the objection commonly offered at the Reformation to the system of Indulgences for the remission of penance, whether in this life or the next. 'All such penances being only medicines prescribed for the health of a man's soul, it were surely a strange way of doing good to a sick man to absolve him from taking his physic³.'

¹ This penalty may be in fact actually paid, and the satisfaction given vicariously, according to the explanation of Dante in *Purg.* vi. 37-39.

² Such a process, though applicable to τιμωρία, could not be extended to κάλασις. Remedies cannot be taken vicariously. As to *them* we may say, 'No man may redeem his brother, nor make agreement to God for him.'

³ From Froude's *History of the Council of Trent*, p. 29.

Still, let it not be for a moment supposed that Dante so far departs from the teaching of the Church, and of his master Aquinas in particular, as not to allow that we can assist with our prayers even those in Purgatory itself¹; but such assistance would be very different indeed from what is popularly understood by 'getting souls out of Purgatory.' The position of Dante may be explained thus:—

As we are taught that we may offer intercessory prayers for our living friends that they may profit by God's dispensations of sorrow, pain, warning, or encouragement, so assuredly would Dante hold, believing vividly as he did in 'the Communion of Saints,' that this privilege and duty extended also to the discipline of those who have gone before, that discipline being but the continuation and the 'filling up of that which is lacking' in the discipline of this life. (See this clearly expressed in *Purg.* xi. 70-72.) Now, the same discipline may exercise a greater or a less influence according to the disposition of the sufferer. That disposition may be modified by Divine influence in answer to intercessory prayer², proceeding (as Dante insists often) from 'a heart which is itself living in grace,' and so the remedial chastisement may be made more speedily effective³. Thus, indirectly, it is true, Purgatorial penance may be abridged, but only thus, most certainly, in Dante's view. It may be said of one who is thus

¹ I believe that on every one of the *Cornici*, except, significantly, that on which *Accidia* is chastised, a reference to this occurs, either in the form of a request for such prayers, or of an acknowledgement of the benefits already derived therefrom. See (1) xi. 31-36; (2) xiii. 144; (3) xvi. 50, 51; (4); (5) xix. 95, 142, and perhaps xx. 37; (6) xxiii. 88-90; (7) xxvi. 130. For this omission in the case of *Accidia* see further the Essay on *Symmetry of the Purgatorio*.

² This is precisely the explanation offered by Dante for the salvation of Trajan, owing to the 'effectual fervent prayer' of S. Gregory, in *Par.* xx. 111:—

'Di viva speme, che mise la possa
Ne' prieghi fatti a Dio per suscitarla,
Sì che potesse sua voglia esser mossa.'

'Sua voglia' is of course the will of Trajan.

³ Compare *Par.* xx. 52-4, on the converse effect of punishment delayed on earth in answer to prayer:—

'Ora conosce che il giudizio eterno
Non si trasmuta, quando degno prego
Fa crastino laggiù dell' odierno.'

helped, in the language of the Book of Wisdom, 'being made perfect in a short time, he fulfilled a long time¹'. In daring but reverent words Dante once declares that God Himself *cannot* pardon an impenitent man. Even so, he would hold, God *cannot* admit into His presence a soul that is not wholly pure. The process by which it becomes so may be longer or shorter, but, be it long or be it short, this condition *must* first be fulfilled. It may be hastened by grace, but it cannot be dispensed with by will, not even by God's will. One may judge from this how utterly Dante would have repudiated any *mechanical* system of pardons or indulgences as being, from his point of view, preposterous in theory as well as pernicious in its practical results.

¹ Τελειωθείς ἐν ὀλίγῳ ἐπλήρωσε πολλοὺς χρόνους (iv. 13). This is the explanation of the one apparent exception in the case of Forese Donati (in *Purg.* xxiii), whom Dante finds already on the sixth *Cornice*, expiating the Sin of Gluttony, though he has been dead but five years (l. 78), and Dante is aware that he delayed repentance to the very end of life, 'when he could sin no more' (l. 79). Forese explains that the devout prayers of his wife have 'brought him thus speedily to drink the sweet wormwood of the torments' (l. 85). These have withdrawn him (*tratto*) from the place where one tarries, i.e. Ante-Purgatorio, and have set him free (*liberato*) from the lower circles of the mountain, i.e. the circles of Pride, Envy, Anger, &c. (as to which there is no evidence that his offences were specially aggravated). The distinction between '*tratto*' and '*liberato*' seems significant. The former describes the complete remission of the penal delay; the latter the quickened efficacy of the purgative process. There is also an important passage in *Par.* xv. 91, where Dante speaks definitely of the possibility of the abbreviation of the pains of Purgatory itself, but again, I venture to think, in consistency with the views so often expressed by himself elsewhere, not by their remission, but by the quickened accomplishment of their purpose. In the course of his interview with his ancestor Cacciaguida, the latter declares that his son, and Dante's great-grandfather, is still, after more than a hundred years, circling the mountain on 'la prima cornice'; and he adds:—

'Ben si convien, che la lunga fatica
Tu gli raccorci con l' opere tue.'

It is true that some commentators suppose 'la prima cornice' to refer to the first 'balzo' of Ante-Purgatorio, but I cannot think that Dante would have employed this expression except as referring to the lowest *Cornice* of Purgatory itself, in which Pride is expiated. Nor can I possibly doubt, guided by the sound principle of 'Dante spiegare con Dante,' that the 'opere' here referred to are his exertions in the way of intercessory prayer, such prayer from a heart living in grace as is alone of any avail whatever, according to the repeated declarations of Dante (see *inf.* p. 72). I cannot conceive Dante as entertaining a thought of a 'man helping to redeem his brother' by any other 'opere' whatever. There is no trace of anything of the kind in all his writings.

The following passages deserve to be quoted in further illustration. In *Purg.* xi. 31 *seqq.* Dante declares that the prayers of those in Purgatory are continually ascending on behalf of their friends on earth¹. 'How much then,' he asks, 'may be said and done by us to help them in return to *purge away the stains that they have borne hence*, so that, purified and lightened, they may be *able* to ascend to the starry spheres?' This seems to me to express as clearly as possible the precise way in which the prayers of 'those who have a good root to their will' (*ibid.* l. 33) can be of help to those in Purgatory. Such prayers clearly cannot be had 'to order.' Observe also these words from *Purg.* vi. 26-7: 'These spirits who prayed that another should pray for them, so that their becoming holy might be hastened,' i. e. that they might profit more effectually by their discipline. Again, in *Purg.* xiii. 147, the Sienese Sapia argues that the singular privilege accorded to Dante of visiting the unseen world is a proof of God's special favour towards him, and *therefore* she begs him to help her with his prayers, not however specifying, as in all the cases in Ante-Purgatorio, that she desires any mitigation of punishment. It is surely quite clear that Indulgences would imply a fundamentally different view to that of Dante as to the chief purpose of Purgatorial pains, viz. that they are penal rather than purgative, τιμωρία rather than κάθαρσις. The former aspect, as we have seen, passes almost entirely out of sight with Dante.

Once more, let me say that I must not be understood to identify popular beliefs with the authoritative and esoteric teaching of the Church. But certainly the views of Dante rise sublimely above the popular beliefs, the current teaching, the corrupt practices which were tolerated unrebuked, to some extent often encouraged, seldom attempted to be elevated or purified, by those in ecclesiastical authority in the age of Dante and for long after. These loomed much larger on the

¹ This is one of the few points in which Dante ventures to differ from S. Thomas Aquinas, who distinctly maintains that those who are in Purgatory 'non sunt in statu orandi, sed magis ut oretur pro eis' (ii. 2^dae. Q. 83, Art. xi. 3). It should be added that this opinion of S. Thomas differs from that of many eminent divines both before and after him.

eye than the most admirable precepts which might be found buried in authorized text-books¹. Dante himself, in *De Mon.* I. xiii. 20, denounces the error of all 'qui bona loquendo et mala operando credunt alios vita et moribus informare.' He also adds a singularly ingenious Scriptural illustration of this from the words: 'The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau': 'non advertentes quod plus persuaserunt manus Jacob quam verba, licet illae falsum, illa verum persuaderent.' 'It must needs be that offences come,' and abuses and corruption are by no means the monopoly of the Church of Rome. Yet I am sure its most ardent advocates would not attempt to deny their existence in this connexion.

But not only did Dante in his conception of Purgatory rise far above the beliefs and practice of his age generally, but also no less remarkably above those of some whom the Church has 'delighted to honour' by canonization, though she is not therefore committed to all the details of their teaching. What can be more pitiable, and more alien from the enlightened views of Dante, than the tabulated Penitentiaries of S. Peter Damian, for instance—that S. Peter Damian whom Dante himself honoured and revered²? He and others, whose sanctity and purity of life were as unquestionable as their great learning, constructed for their own and general use elaborate mechanical tables of the equivalents for Purgatorial penance. The fundamental principle of these was that for 'every transgression and disobedience' there was a fixed and definite penalty which must, in some form or another, be actually discharged by the offender. But the score of some offenders would certainly take many centuries to clear off according to the 'Canons of penitence³.' In the computation of S. Peter Damian, one *day's* penance in Purgatory was equivalent to twenty strokes on the hand, or the recitation of fifty Psalms: one *year's* penance might be redeemed by 3,000 such strokes, if accompanied by the recitation of Psalms;

¹ Cf. *Par.* ix. 133 *seqq.*; *Ep.* viii. § 7. ll. 114 *seqq.*

² See *Par.* xxi. Also it seems probable that in *Ep.* viii. § 7. l. 117 we should read 'Damianus' for 'Damascenus.'

³ See Gregorovius, *op. cit.* vol. iv. pp. 105 *seqq.* Many of the details which follow are taken from this source.

or by a money payment of 26 *solidi* by the rich, or 3 *solidi* by the poor. Poor Damian himself was unable to clear off more than a century of Purgatory in a year; but his contemporary ascetic and friend S. Dominic assured him that he could wipe out a century in six days. It was calculated that a whole Psalter accompanied by scourging, estimated at c. 15,000 strokes, was equivalent to five years. Hence a *century* would be represented by twenty Psalters with their due accompaniment of scourging. Damian thinks that his friend can only have *mentally* recited the Psalms¹! I have not transcribed these melancholy details—in which the Psalter is treated merely as though affording convenient material for ‘impositions’—in any scoffing spirit, but to show by what a huge gulf Dante is separated from even some elect teachers of his Church. Turn from all this to the *Purgatorio* of Dante, and in what a totally different atmosphere do we find ourselves!

It will be convenient now to state in summary the principal points which I have here maintained, as embodying Dante’s teaching on this subject:—

1. No formal prayer or mechanical acts of worship would help any one anywhere, either here or in Purgatory.

2. The *τιμωρία* of Ante-Purgatory may be remitted as a pure act of grace and favour, without any corresponding change in the character and disposition of the sinner.

3. Remission of the *κόλασις* of Purgatory itself can never be granted in this way, but only through the amelioration of the disposition of the sufferer and commensurately with that. Ultimately that also may no doubt be said to be equally an act of favour, because it is God who by His grace thus quickens ‘the good desires’ of those chastised. But this touches upon a very deep problem of the relation of the Divine and Human Wills, which bears also upon the sphere of this present life. There is clearly however an essential

¹ Similar details will be found in the Penitentiaries of Bede (or it may be of Egbert, or a contemporary), § 10, and others given by Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils, &c.*, vol. iii. That of Archbishop Theodore, c. 680, was held in very high authority for four centuries and more.

difference between (2) and (3); and also between the teaching of Dante and the common belief and practice of his time, in respect of both (1) and (3).

There is another point to be noticed under this head. According to Dante's teaching, as well as that of Aquinas¹ and the Church generally, Sin, though it continues in Hell, and is repeated, added to, aggravated to all Eternity, is no longer possible in Purgatory. Thus when the Lord's Prayer is repeated on the first *Cornice* of Purgatory the spirits are careful to explain that the last petition is no longer needed for themselves, but is uttered on behalf of those still on earth. See xi. 22-24. Again in xxvi. 130-132, Guido Guinicelli asks for Dante's prayers—observing (like Sapia in the passage already quoted) that he is evidently one highly favoured—in these words:—

'Fagli per me un dir di paternostro,
Quanto bisogna a noi di questo mondo,
Dove poter peccar non è più nostro?'

But, though 'sin and temptation are found no more, the stains of past sin remain in the memory.' In the words of Dr. Newman:—

'For though
Now sinless, thou wilt feel that thou hast sinned
As never didst thou feel?'

¹ E.g. *Summa*, ii. 2^{da}. Q. 83, Art. 11: 'illi qui sunt in Purgatorio [sunt] superiores nobis propter impeccabilitatem.'

² We should set in contrast with this the singular passage in which Dante describes the aspect presented by past sins to those in Heaven. See *Par.* ix. 103. The speaker is the amorous prelate Folco of Marseilles, who was well qualified by his experience to express an opinion on this subject:—

'Non però qui si pente, ma si ride,
Non della colpa, ch' a mente non torna,
Ma del valore, ch' ordinò e provvide.'

Startling as this language is, it is little more or less than a transcript of a passage in Aquinas, viz. *Summa*, Suppl. Q. 87, Art. 1. 3, Concl.: 'Sancti in patria erunt ita perfusi gaudio quod dolor in eis locum habere non poterit, et ideo de peccatis non dolebunt, sed potius gaudebunt de divina misericordia qua eis peccata sunt relaxata.' We might also compare S. Aug. *De Civ. Dei* xxiii. 30: 'voluntas libera, ab omni malo liberata, et impleta omni bono. . . oblita culparum, oblita poenarum, nec tamen ideo suae liberationis oblita, ut liberatori non sit grata.'

One consequence of this is that the will, so long rebellious, cannot yet move itself in complete harmony and unison with the will of God, which is the supreme condition of the life of Heaven (see *Par.* iii. 85 and xxxiii. 143, and note *Purg.* xxi. 61 *seqq.*, already quoted). Now contrast with this the condition in which the Soul finds itself when its purgation is accomplished. This is set forth in the beautiful language of Virgil, when he takes leave of Dante as his Guide, at the end of *Purg.* xxvii, after he has conducted him through all the seven *Cornici* of Purgatorial penance. Dante has then symbolically experienced the benefits of this penance; all the seven P's, denoting the seven deadly sins, have been in succession erased from his forehead, and he has (symbolically still) been 'freed from sin,' or the capacity of sinning¹. This, then, is the language of Virgil when bidding him farewell: 'Thine own pleasure henceforth take for thy guide. Thou art beyond the steep, beyond the narrow paths. . . . Look no more for my speech, or my guidance: free, right, and sound is thy judgement, and it were a fault not to act upon its impulse. Wherefore over thyself I crown and mitre thee' (*Purg.* xxvii. 130-2; 139-142). When sin is wholly eradicated, a man becomes 'a law unto himself' in both parts of his nature. The double guidance of *De Mon.* III. xvi. 75 is no longer needed. In very similar language writes Dr. Newman, in the *Dream of Gerontius*—a poem, however, singularly devoid of traces of the influence of Dante:—

'You cannot now
Cherish a wish which ought not to be wished.'

Compare again Browning —

'The ultimate angel's law,
Indulging every instinct of the soul,
There where law, life, joy, impulse are one thing'²

¹ Only 'symbolically,' since he recognizes that after his death he will have sins to expiate in Purgatory, particularly Pride, and, in a less degree, Envy (see *Purg.* xiii. 133-8), and perhaps also Anger (see *Purg.* xv. 130-132).

² A curious question arises as to the possibility of Sin in Ante-Purgatory. This place, it must be remembered, is a pure invention of Dante's own, the purpose of which has been already described (*sup.*, p. 52). The punishment

V. We next come to a subject on which the teaching and practice of Dante are in very strong contrast to that of the Reformers, viz. the Cultus of the Virgin, and, as we might add, the invocation and ministry of the saints generally, though it will be enough to discuss the former subject alone.

In the exalted position assigned by Dante to the Blessed Virgin as 'the Queen of Heaven,' and the enthusiastic lan-

of detention therein being purely penal, it seems to have no beneficial effect on the sufferer, and may be shortened by the pure favour of God in answer to pious prayers, or by his accepting its vicarious discharge through the ardent love of another. See *Purg.* vi. 38, 39:—

'Perchè foco d' amor compia in un punto
Ciò che dee satisfar chi qui s' astalla.'

Did Dante conceive Sin to be possible in Ante-Purgatory? He certainly represents the spirits in Canto viii as being subject to temptation, especially at night, and their danger to be so real as to require special angelic protection (see ll. 37-39; 94-105). The whole scene seems inspired by the language of the beautiful Compline Hymn '*Te lucis ante terminum*' (l. 13), and Dante expressly says that they devoutly recited the whole hymn (*I inno intero*, l. 17). Contrast with this the passages in *Purg.* xi. 22; xxvi. 130; already quoted). He seems thus to draw our attention to the words:—

'Procul recedant somnia,
Et noctium phantasmata;
Hostemque nostrum comprime,
Ne polluantur corpora.'

(With the third line compare 'avversaro' in l. 95.)

Temptation, it is true, is possible. 'yet without sin,' though, if real, it seems to imply the danger and possibility of sin. Perhaps the vigilance of the angel-guards may be intended to make actual sin, even in thought, entirely impossible, and to avert the temptation before it is actually felt¹. Perhaps also it may be urged that Ante-Purgatory was an invention of Dante the poet rather than Dante the theologian. The long penal exclusion of certain Souls from Purgatory is not improbably a classical feature borrowed (like many other such details) from Virgil, whom, we have seen, Dante not only admired but also regarded as being in some sense 'inspired.' We can hardly suppose that Dante considered Ante-Purgatory as a matter of serious belief, any more than (for instance) the equally original conception of the situation and conditions of the Mountain of Purgatory itself. This also involves many anomalies and impossibilities, and it is probable that in these (and many other similar matters) we are not to subject his poetic inventions to strict logical analysis or to embarrass the poet, or ourselves, with difficulties that may be deduced from them or shown to be involved in them. Dante is not to be treated as if he were a mere Schoolman. In a great part of *Divina Commedia* at any rate he is a poet first and a theologian afterwards.

¹ To borrow the language of S. Thomas, quoted *infra*, p. 64 n., the 'fomes' of sin may be present and yet specially restrained (*ligatus*): so as never to pass into act, as he maintains was the case with the Blessed Virgin.

guage in which he speaks of her, we recognize the expression not only of theological doctrine, but also of a deep personal devotion. As she is mentioned or referred to between fifty and sixty times in the *Divina Commedia* alone, not to speak of the other works of Dante, it will be impossible within our limits to give any adequate idea of the prominent place which she occupied in the system and also in the heart of Dante. In the theological system (so to speak) of Dante the Virgin is not only the symbol, but also the source and medium for mankind of God's 'prevenient grace.' In the very beginning of the *Inferno*, when Dante, just escaped from the dark forest of error, finds to his cost that he has 'no power of himself to help himself,' Virgil comes to his aid, urged thereto by Beatrice, she having in her turn been moved by Santa Lucia, and she again in the first instance by the Blessed Virgin, 'Donna gentil nel ciel ¹,' the 'gracious lady in Heaven.' 'Which things are an allegory.' Virgil, by general consent, symbolizes Human Reason; Beatrice, Revealed Truth, as enshrined in the teaching of the Church ². Santa Lucia probably (in my own opinion at any rate) was regarded by Dante as his 'patron saint,' and in this way as specially promoting the communication, at least to him, of God's 'co-operating grace.' This, at any rate, seems the best explanation of the very prominent part assigned to her, and the special services rendered by her (both in *Inf.* ii and in *Purg.* ix) in the work of Dante's own recovery from Sin to Holiness. But as the first actual step in that recovery is made through the intervention of Virgil, who conducts Dante through the regions of Hell, Dante would thereby teach us that, first of all, Reason must show us the folly and degrading consequences of Sin (see *Purg.* xxx. 136-8). Yet the office of Reason, though thus essential, is very limited, as Virgil is made several times to declare ³. It must give place to

¹ This 'Donna gentil' is sometimes, but beyond doubt wrongly, thought to refer to Beatrice.

² 'Not Theology as a dialectic system, but as a principle of conviction, the principle of faith,' as it is admirably expressed in the *Quarterly Review* Article referred to in the next Essay.

³ E. g. *Purg.* xviii. 46-48; xxi. 32, 33; xxvii. 127-9. Compare further,

Revelation, to which as a 'schoolmaster' it guides us. Thus Virgil leads Dante to Beatrice, 'che opera è di fede,' and hands him over to her. But neither Reason nor Revelation could help us unless God by His 'prevenient grace' (*gratia operans*) 'puts into our minds good desires,' and this grace He wills should originate with, and operate through, the Queen of Heaven, the Blessed Virgin; even as *gratia co-operans*, which 'brings the same to good effect,' is procured for us mediately through the intercession and ministry of the Saints. Such appears to be the teaching of Dante, and much of it is undoubtedly derived directly from S. Bernard¹, and it is in his character of 'suo fedel Bernardo' that that saint at last supersedes even Beatrice, and finally leads Dante to the glorified Virgin to whose care and favour he especially commends him. There are many passages in Canto xxxiii which almost reproduce the language of S. Bernard¹. Thus in *Purg.* xxvi. 59 we read, 'There is a Lady above who wins grace for us, by virtue of which I carry my mortal body through your world of Purgatory.' And in the last Canto of the *Paradiso* the glimpse to which Dante is admitted of the supreme mystery of the Trinity is due to her intercession, after the magnificent hymn of prayer addressed to her by

Conv. II. iii. 10 *seqq.*; III. xv. 59-69; *De Mon.* II. viii. 23-27; III. xvi. 58 *seqq.*

¹ E.g. in the Sermon *In Nativitate Virginis Mariae (sub init.)*: 'Advocatum habere vis et ad ipsum (sc. Iesum Christum)? Ad Mariam recurre.' 'Totius boni plenitudinem posuit (sc. Deus) in Maria, ut proinde si quid spei in nobis est, si quid gratiae, si quid salutis, ab ea noverimus redundare.' 'Quaeramus gratiam, et per Mariam quaeramus, quae quod quaerit invenit; et frustrari non potest.' Again (*ib.*) she is compared to an aqueduct ('*aquae-ductus noster*') which receives from the heart of the Father the fullness of the waters of grace and conveys it to mankind, and this is indeed the leading thought of the Sermon, the heading of which is *De Aquae-ductu*. Again, in the Sermon *De Vig. Nat. Domini* III. § 10 *ad fin.*: 'datum est Mariae, ut per eam acciperes quicquid haberes. . . . nihil nos Deus habere voluit, quod per Mariae manus non transiret' (i. p. 771). Well might Chaucer say:—

'And thou that flour of virgines art alle

Of whom that Bernard list so wel to wryte. (p. 649.)

Such passages fully explain the language of Dante in several places in the *Commedia*, and he may be said to have set his seal to such teaching by the prominence given to S. Bernard, especially in relation to the B. M. V., in the closing Cantos of the *Paradiso*.

S. Bernard at the beginning of the Canto. We may note this passage especially: 'Lady, so great art thou, and so great is thy power, that he who wishes for grace, and has not recourse to thee, wishes that his desire should fly without wings. Thy goodness not only succours him who asks, but oftentimes freely precedes the asking' (ll. 13-18)¹. In Canto xxxii. 85-7, S. Bernard bids Dante 'look upon the face which most resembles Christ, because its brightness alone can prepare thee to behold Christ.' Again, in the *Purgatorio* we find that the mere utterance of her name by dying lips, even when repentance has been till then neglected, is enough to secure the privilege of admission to Purgatorial penance, and, consequently, of ultimate salvation. Witness the case of Buonconte in *Purg.* v. 100. Once more in each of the seven divisions of Purgatory, in which severally one of the deadly sins is purged, when examples of the contrary virtue are presented for the meditation of the penitents, the first example is in every case taken from some incident in the life of the Virgin—a thought borrowed by Dante from S. Bonaventura².

¹ This is almost identical with the language of Richard of S. Victor, *Expos. in Cant. xxi* (tom. iii. p. 522 E): 'Velocius occurrit eius pietas, quam invocetur, et causas miserorum anticipat.'

² Viz. from the *Speculum B. M. V.* Lect. iv, and still more fully in Lect. xv. (On this see further, *infra* Essay V.) Now in the *Lectio* immediately preceding this, viz. xiv, which therefore we cannot doubt was familiar to Dante, there occurs a very remarkable passage on the infinite compassion of the Virgin: 'Benedicta ergo est Maria pro multiplici misericordia, quam per eam homo recepit; benedicta utique, quia per eam Deus homini placabilis est, benedicta quoque est, quia per eam homo Deo acceptabilis est.' This, he says, is prefigured in the story of Abigail, David, and Nabal. Abigail (whose name means 'the Joy of the Father') represents Mary; David represents God, and Nabal the sinner. David was angry with Nabal and would have killed him, but he was appeased by Abigail, and so spared him. Even so God is reconciled to the sinner by Mary. Abigail appeased David by her words and gifts; Mary appeases God by her prayers and merits.

Remembering that Dante specially admired S. Bonaventura (v. *Paradiso* xii), and certainly knew this and others of his works, this passage, as it seems to me, probably throws fresh light on several expressions in Dante respecting the Blessed Virgin, which are certainly conceived in a somewhat similar spirit; and in particular on such language as that of *Purg.* x. 42, or of *Purg.* xxvi. 59, 'Che ad aprir l' alto amor volse la chiave,' 'Donna . . . che n' acquista grazia.' These passages seem to echo the thought of S. Bonaventura, that 'through Her God became reconciled to man as well as man to God.'

In the *Vita Nuova* (§ 29) Dante says that 'the name of Mary was always spoken of with the greatest reverence by the blessed Beatrice.' His own personal devotion is testified by the declaration in *Par.* xxiii. 88, that 'he ever invokes the name of that fair flower morning and evening¹.' There are two passages in particular in which the language of Dante is surprisingly strong. In *Par.* xxxiii. 40 he speaks of the eyes of the Blessed Virgin as being regarded by God with love and reverence ('Gli occhi da Dio dilette e venerati'). And in l. 34 of the same Canto he applies to her the same expression by which he elsewhere describes the Omnipotence of God: 'Regina, che puoi Ciò che tu vuoi.' Compare with this, *Inf.* iii. 95; and v. 23. Space forbids further illustration of this subject, but one other point must not be passed over. With all Dante's devotion and enthusiasm for the Blessed Virgin, there is one point at which he stops short. He never declares her to be sinless or immaculate in her conception. One only there was, 'Che nacque e visse senza pecca' (*Inf.* xxxiv. 115). This point is admirably dealt with in the brilliant essay of Dr. Liddon on 'Dante and Aquinas,' where he points out that the restraining influence was doubtless that of S. Thomas², 'whose firm attitude on this question (in the words of Dr. Liddon³) enabled the Dominican Order for six hundred years to resist first Franciscans, then Jesuits... a resistance which has ceased only in our own day⁴. One of

¹ Referring to the ringing of the Angelus, a devotion introduced by Gregory IX (1239), and enjoined as a universal practice by John XXII, in a Bull dated Oct. 13, 1318, and further enforced in another, May 13, 1327 (Migne, 3^{me} *Encyclopédie Théologique*, vol. xxxii. p. 819). See a reference to the Evening Angelus Bell in the beautiful passage at the beginning of *Purg.* viii.

² The attitude of S. Thomas may have been 'firm,' but the dividing line between him and the Franciscan view seems to us rather a thin one. This question is handled by him in very carefully guarded language in *Summa*, iii. Q. 27; esp. Artt. 2, 3, and 4. The following are some of the principal conclusions:—'Beata Virgo contraxit quidem originale peccatum, sed ab eo fuit mundata antequam ex utero nasceretur.' Again, the 'fomes' of sin remained in her, but it was restrained from passing into act, and at the conception of the Son of God it was entirely removed. Again, 'Fatendum est eam nec mortale nec veniale peccatum unquam commisisse.'

³ *Essays and Addresses*, pp. 174-5.

⁴ In illustration of this I may note that, even more than a century and a half later than Dante, Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484), himself as Francesco da Savona

the first results of that firm attitude of S. Thomas was that in the *Divina Commedia* Mary is everything else, but she is not conceived immaculate.' One passage only need be quoted to show how carefully guarded was the language of Dante even in his most ecstatic flights. In *Conv.* IV. v. 32 *seqq.* we read:—'And because the hostel, where the King of Heaven was to enter, must needs be most clean and pure, a most holy race was appointed, from which, after many worthy services, there should be born a woman *better than all the rest* ("ottima di tutte l'altre")—a remarkably restrained expression—who should be the chamber of the Son of God. That race is the race of David, of which was born the confidence and glory of humanity, i.e. Mary.' Here, and elsewhere, it would have been impossible for Dante not to have said more, if in his heart he had accepted such language as was beginning to be applied to her, especially by Franciscan divines, and notably by S. Bonaventura, whose writings Dante both highly esteemed and freely used¹.

VI. We are now in a position to take a general view of the five points hitherto dealt with, so as to determine the attitude of Dante in respect of the reform both of doctrine and discipline, which in the two following centuries became such a burning question. In particular, we will endeavour to contrast his position with that of Savonarola and that of Luther.

First as to matters of *faith and doctrine*. It may be declared at once that there is not the very smallest ground for claiming Dante in this respect as a 'Reformer before the Reformation.' There is no trace in his writings of doubt or dissatisfaction respecting any part of the teaching of the Church in matters of doctrine authoritatively laid down².

an ardent Franciscan, was earnestly devoted personally to the veneration of the B. M. V., and a firm believer in her Immaculate Conception. In 1477 he issued accordingly a special office for the festival of her Conception, with liberal indulgences attached to its use. Still, in 1483, he had to issue a decree declaring the belief in her Immaculate Conception to be 'an open question, not yet decided by the Apostolic See, and forbidding the disputants on either side to accuse their adversaries of heresy' (Bp. Creighton's *History of the Papacy*, iii. p. 133).

¹ And also sometimes by S. Bernard. See passages quoted pp. 62, 63.

² I do not regard his attitude respecting the *practice* of Indulgences, as to

He would probably have considered any such feeling as most presumptuous, and, indeed, as little short of blasphemous. A great deal has been written about his supposed defence of the right of 'private judgement,' of his alleged sympathy with 'free thinking,' or with 'philosophic doubt,' and so forth. Of this also it appears to me that no evidence can be found. There seems every reason to believe him to have been an entirely firm, faithful, and devoted son of the Church¹ without any misgiving as to her teaching, or as to her indefeasible right to teach². All this is perfectly consistent with the most scathing denunciations of abuses *in practice* on the part of Popes, Cardinals, and the members of religious orders. Dante himself quaintly expresses the distinction in his letter addressed to the Italian Cardinals. He imagines them retorting upon him that by so interfering he is repeating the sin of Uzzah. 'Truly (he replies) I am one of the most insignificant of the sheep of the flock of Jesus Christ, and certainly do not abuse any pastoral office because I have no wealth! (Note the caustic irony of that "because.") Nor am I guilty of the presumption of Uzzah, since he interfered with the ark, I with the refractory oxen ("boves calcitrantes") that are dragging it out of the path³!' Nor indeed is the language of Dante respecting such abuses a whit more

which I have spoken strongly, as inconsistent with this, for I am not aware that, as a *doctrine* to be held *de fide*, the Church was as yet committed to any formal pronouncement on this subject. As I have noted before, the Council of Trent was yet in the future.

¹ Note his affection for the Offices of the Church as manifested by his frequent references to them in the *Purgatorio*. Moreover, in many if not most of these cases the days, hours, and seasons with which he associates them correspond with those with which they are connected in the Breviary, &c.

² He could scarcely otherwise have said of himself:—

'La Chiesa militante alcun figliuolo

Non ha con più speranza.' (*Par.* xxv. 52, 53.)

It would never have occurred to Dante, any more than to the author of *Piers the Plowman* (v. *supra*), that he was imperilling his position as a true Christian and Churchman by such language.

³ *Ep.* viii. § 5. In § 8 occurs another Scriptural illustration equally unpalatable. He claims to be speaking the sentiments which most men feel but have not courage to express. He hopes this silence will not continue, because 'Vivit Dominus: quique movit linguam in asina Palaam, Dominus est etiam modernorum brutorum.' Truly Dante knew how 'sillogettare invidiosi veri.'

severe than what may be found in the writings of many canonized Saints, such as S. Peter Damian, S. Bonaventura, S. Bernard, and many others. Again, that Dante would have joined Luther in his denunciation of the sale of pardons and indulgences, and such like abuses, we cannot for a moment doubt. He has in fact anticipated him here. In *Par.* xxvii. 52 (as we have seen) he makes S. Peter say that he never thought to have become the figure on a seal attached to venal and mendacious privileges, which oftentimes make him to blush and glow with indignation even in heaven¹. Still there is no evidence, but very much the reverse, that Dante would ever have dared to lay his hand upon the ark of doctrine.

Nor indeed was this limited to authority in doctrine only. We have in *Purg.* ii a remarkable proof of Dante's unflinching belief in the binding and loosing power committed to the Pope. He would no doubt except cases in which it was palpably and obviously abused, as in the action attributed to Boniface in *Inf.* xxvii of offering absolution for sins *before* they were committed. The case I refer to in *Purg.* ii is this. Boniface VIII proclaimed, in connexion with the Jubilee of 1300, an Indulgence for all who fulfilled certain conditions. This was contained in a Bull dated February 22 (*al.* 27), 1300, but he *antedated* the privileges offered so as to take effect from the Christmas Day last preceding, i.e. according to Roman usage from the *first day* of the year 1300, the 'centesimo anno' as Dante calls it. In ll. 94-99 we have a most remarkable recognition by Dante of the efficacy of this Indulgence. Casella says that the Angel who conveys Souls to Purgatory acts apparently with extreme arbitrariness and harshness (though no doubt really with perfect justice) in accepting some and rejecting others, often and for long periods. But he adds that *for the last three months* his demeanour has quite changed, and he receives all who come with all good will. Now the scene being laid at Easter 1300, the three months' limit carries us back to about the previous Christmas. Dante is doubtless alluding to the beneficial

¹ See *Par.* xxix. 118 *sqq.* already quoted.

effects of Boniface's Bull of Indulgence. Observe that he represents the Angel's conduct as having been affected and regulated by it from the actual period to which Boniface antedated its effects. The Angel therefore conforms to its conditions *by anticipation*, about two months before it was proclaimed upon earth, because it was going to be thus antedated. It would be impossible for Dante to give a stronger proof of his belief in the absolute validity of acts of Papal authority even when exercised by a Boniface VIII, whom as a man he both hated and despised.

Here, then, it is worth while to compare his position with that of Savonarola, who also has been very much misunderstood, and with that of Luther, who asserted—quite unjustly however—that much of his own teaching had been anticipated by Savonarola. It is true that Dante, Savonarola, and Luther would have been in full accord in their denunciations of practical abuses in the Church, and of the conduct, official as well as private, of individual Popes. Savonarola also went so far, after much hesitation, and under strong pressure of circumstances such as Dante was not called upon to face, as to disregard and to denounce as invalid the Papal excommunication launched against himself. We can imagine his exclaiming with Dante, 'Per lor maledizion non sì si perde,' &c. (*Purg.* iii. 133). His well-known words on the scaffold amount to this, when to the Bishop who proclaimed his separation from the Church militant and triumphant he replied, 'Militant, not triumphant; that is not in your power.' His language again in regard to the Pope's sentence, first of inhibition, then of excommunication, is conceived entirely in the spirit and from the point of view of Dante. 'No papal prohibition (said Savonarola) should move him from the plain path of duty. If the Pope's commands contradict the law of love as set forth in the Gospel, we must withstand them, as S. Paul withstood S. Peter¹. Again, 'a Pope who misuses his power is to be resisted. . . . An unjust excommunication is invalid². . . . When God's agent withdraws himself from God he is no longer His instrument, he is but

¹ Creighton, *op. cit.* iii. p. 223.

² *Ibid.*, p. 230.

a broken iron. My excommunication was obtained by false information. If I knew that it was justified, I would have respected it¹. Yet this same Savonarola submitted without protest to the scandalous mockery of a trial by the Papal Commissioners who condemned him to degradation and death. Still more, in his last moments he accepted meekly the offer of the Pope—Alexander VI, be it remembered—granting him a plenary indulgence from the pains of Purgatory. This alone enables us to see clearly the vast difference between his position and that of Luther, who spoke freely of the Pope as Anti-Christ. We cannot help thinking that the position of Dante was an intermediate one to these, and from what we have already said about his conception of Purgatory, as well as from other passages in his works, we imagine that he would have received with an incredulous and cynical smile a similar offer on his own death-bed from 'the Caorsino' (i.e. John XXII, see *Par.* xxvii. 58).

Then there is a subject on which Savonarola and Dante would certainly have stood side by side, but in strong contrast with Luther, and that is, that neither would have dared to attempt the reform of doctrine, as has already been pointed out in the case of Dante. Both would have been in accord in feeling that that rested on an authority which compelled its unquestioning acceptance, and which was quite beyond the reach of individual criticism. Private judgement as to the conformity of conduct, actions, or policy, even of the Pope himself, with the broad and clear statements of Scripture, stands on a different footing. If Holy Scripture lays down anything in perfectly clear terms, such, for instance, as the 'form' or essence of the Church (as in the passage from the *De Monarchia* quoted *supra*, p. 14), then 'other foundation can no man lay,' and it becomes merely a question of common sense whether such conditions are observed or violated in practice or in precept. In this also Dante and Savonarola are in full agreement. 'The Pope (says Savonarola) is God upon earth and Vicar of Christ. True, but God and Christ command us to love our brothers and to

¹ Creighton, *op. cit.* pp. 231, 232.

do good. If, therefore, the Pope should command anything contrary to the law of love, and we were to obey him, then you would be setting the Pope above God¹. Here, then, as we just now said, we have to deal with plain questions of fact, of which any one can and must judge for himself². Two plainly contradictory propositions cannot both be true. No 'authority' can compass that.

In the proclamation, then, of dogma, or in the exposition of the doctrines involved in the language of Holy Scripture, Dante and Savonarola certainly regarded the Church as 'the keeper and interpreter of Holy Writ,' and they would assuredly have repudiated the suggestion of the possibility of her giving contradictory or false interpretations. (The Church, observe, not the individual Pope.) This would be 'derogare auctori naturae,' since His presence and guidance are promised to the Church in those same Scriptures. Neither ventured to cross the Rubicon that separates the censure of practice and that of doctrine. They both stood firm to the end in the 'Church's doctrine and fellowship,' and in unhesitating allegiance to the universal spiritual supremacy of the Pope. Their attitude may be precisely summed up in those words of our Lord—'The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All therefore whatsoever they command you, that observe and do, but do not after their works, for they say, and do not³.'

Finally, then, Dante's position both in what he unhesitatingly accepts, and in what he fearlessly condemns, is a

¹ It is still more startling to find the following extraordinarily bold language in the mouth of the Franciscan Archbishop of Canterbury, Peckham, a contemporary of Dante, and one of the greatest mathematicians of the thirteenth century. 'In matters of *doctrine* one is not bound to adhere to the authority of the Pope, or of Gregory, or of Augustine, or of any other master whatever: but solely to the authority of the Bible and of necessary reason' (Rashdall's *Universities*, &c., ii. p. 528). This was in 1288! This is conceived much more in the spirit of Luther than of either Savonarola or Dante.

² Compare the still bolder language of Euripides:—

'Εὐ θεοὶ τι δρῶντες αἰσχροῖς, οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοί.' Bellerophon (*Fragment*).

³ Or, as Dante phrases it in *Purg.* xvi. 98, 99,

'Il pastor che precede

Ruminar può ma non ha l'unghie fesse':

i. e. his doctrine is sound, but his practice or 'walk' is corrupt.

The same distinction was even more vigorously expressed by the popular

perfectly intelligible one, but it is widely different from that of the later Reformers or from anything that could be called 'Protestant.' With any such spirit it is quite clear that he would have had no sympathy. Nor can we doubt that, had he lived two centuries later, assuming him to have been himself unchanged, he would have found a place for Luther and other leaders of the Reformation in Malebolge, i.e. in the ninth pit of the eighth Circle of Hell, in the company of Mahomet and other famous promoters of schism and discord. For it must be clear to the most casual reader of the *De Monarchia* that the bare conception of a 'National Church' claiming independence of the authority of the Pope, or presuming to set forth its own 'Articles of Religion,' would have been regarded by Dante as utterly monstrous¹.

As to the distinction upon which I have insisted in the case of Dante as compared with Luther between the reform of *practice* and the handling of *doctrine*, one further remark may be made. It is to be remembered that the occasion, if not the cause, of the greatest religious movements of reform has generally been found in abuses of *practice*, not in any scruples concerning *doctrine*. This was conspicuously the case in England. It was still more so in Scotland, where the Reformation was prompted by national or political sentiments rather even than by abuses of practice. In Germany again, the scandal of Indulgences, the so-called 'privilege of clergy,' the oppression of ecclesiastical exactions, these and no doctrinal difficulties were the moving cause of the Reformation there. Even Luther himself, looking back on his career, declared that if the Pope had withdrawn his Indulgences he himself would have gone no further², and that he regarded Pope Leo's excommunication as a special act of God's Providence, for till then he had seen only the wickedness of

leader Giovanni Capocci, who bluntly interrupted an edifying sermon of Innocent III with the exclamation, 'Thy mouth is as the mouth of God, but thy works are like the works of the devil' (Gregorovius, *op. cit.* v. p. 94).

¹ In *De Mon.* III. iii. 17 *seqq.* Dante is discussing the syllogism—'Petrus potuit solvere omnia et ligare: successor Petri potest quicquid Petrus potuit: Ergo,' &c. To this Dante says at once—'Minorem concedo.'

² Froude, *op. cit.* pp. 114, 152.

Indulgences and no more; but this had opened his eyes further. So at any rate *thought* Luther, whether rightly or not, I do not say. But at any rate it is a certain fact 'that the storm, when it first arose, had no connexion with doctrine, even in Luther's case, but with a glaring abuse of doctrine *in practice*.

This imperfect sketch of Dante's religious teaching may be concluded with a brief notice of one or two other conspicuous features which it presents, which are not of a controversial character. Most remarkable is it to note his detestation of anything unreal or mechanical in connexion with religion, and his frequent insistence that it must be personal, heartfelt, and consistently carried out in practice. Thus, in the *Convito* (IV. xxviii. 68), Dante protests against restricting the term 'religious life' to those who 'adopt the habit or the life of S. Benedict, S. Augustine, S. Francis, or S. Dominic. One may devote oneself as well to good and true religion in the married state, for God desires no religion from us but that of the heart.' And in *Purg.* xxv. 133-5 the examples of Chastity expressly include

'donne
... e mariti che fur casti,
Come virtute e matrimonio imponne.'

So in the passage already quoted from the *De Monarchia*: 'The form or essence of the Church is nothing else but the embodiment of the life of Christ.' On the subject of prayer, which he beautifully describes as 'quella favella, Ch' è una in tutti' (*Par.* xiv. 88), Dante insists over and over again on the futility of any mere *form* of prayer. It must proceed from the heart, and also from 'a heart living in grace.' 'Of what avail,' he asks, 'is any other, for it is not heard in heaven' ¹? Prayer, to be effectual, must arise from 'those who have a good root to their will' ². Nino Visconti asks that the prayers of his little daughter Giovanna (*act.* 9) may be offered on his behalf 'where the prayers of the guileless are answered' ³. Prayer which is 'disjoined from God' is useless. All these and other similar passages, it may be observed, occur in special reference to 'Prayers for the Dead.' Then, again, as

¹ *Purg.* iv. 133-135.

² xi. 33.

³ viii. 72. The same idea is implied in vi. 42, xi. 130, and xiii. 146, 147.

to the dispensation for neglected or broken vows—an obvious source of dangerous abuse in practice, and one on which, in fact, scandalous abuses did arise against which the later Reformers had strenuously to protest—on this subject also Dante speaks very emphatically in *Par.* v. 19–63. The essence of a vow is the sacrifice of the will. That is the supreme offering which man can make to God, and nothing can in any way compensate for that. The Church may indeed vary the details of the form in which that sacrifice is offered, but if a change is to be made at all, the amount must be at least half as much again ('as four is contained in six,' l. 60), and even that can only be allowed through the most solemn exercise of ecclesiastical authority, never by individual action (ll. 55–57).

Another illustration may be given from Dante's repeated declaration that without genuine and sincere personal penitence no forgiveness of sin is either possible or even conceivable. One of the finest examples of this is found in the splendid episode of Guido da Montefeltro, who, in spite of Dante's panegyric upon him in *Conv.* IV. xxviii. 61 as 'nobilissimo nostro Latino,' is ruthlessly condemned in Hell for fraudulent counsel, which, though mechanically absolved by the Pope, was not truly repented of. That splendid episode occurs in *Inf.* xxvii. At the end of a life full of deeds of craft and cunning Guido became a Franciscan monk to make amends for the evil that he had done. And this, he says, would have availed him but that 'the prince of our modern Pharisees' (i.e. Boniface VIII) prevailed on him to give once more fraudulent and treacherous advice. This the Pope did by reminding him that he need have no fear of the consequences, since he, Boniface himself, as Pope, had control of the keys that could open and shut Heaven at his pleasure, and that, accordingly, he then and there formally absolved him *by anticipation* for the sin which he was asked to commit. On Guido's death soon afterwards S. Francis and 'one of the black cherubim' are represented as contending for the possession of his soul, like Michael and the devil for the body of Moses in the Epistle of S. Jude. The devil gains his point

by the unanswerable argument that absolution is null and void without repentance, and that *repentance and the will to sin cannot exist together*, 'through the contradiction which admits it not.' After this he carries off the soul of the shuddering sinner in triumph, addressing him with the bitter taunt, 'Perhaps you were not aware that I was a logician' ('Forse tu non pensavi ch' io loico fossi').

Whether Boniface was guilty of the 'illogical' action thus scornfully denounced is uncertain. But it is said to have been practised a century later by his feeble successor Innocent VIII (Cibò). In his eagerness to raise money by any means he not only released for payment notorious criminals—adopting the scandalous suggestion (a 'κατανόημα χρηματιστικόν' as Aristotle might call it) of his Chancellor, the infamous Borgia, that 'God desires not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should *pay and live*'—but he went further, and granted pardon for sins *before their commission*¹.

In *De Mon.* III. viii. 41 *seqq.* Dante waxes even yet more bold than in the passage last quoted, and, when commenting on the expression 'whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,' argues that this cannot be understood in any absolute or arbitrary sense; and, among other proofs amounting to an 'argumentum ad absurdum' of such a supposition, he adds, 'In that case the Pope might even absolve me while still impenitent, which *not even God Himself would be able to do*.' We are reminded of the words which Shakespeare put into the mouth of the guilty king in *Hamlet*:—

' May one be pardoned and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, *there* the action lies
In his true nature,' &c.

¹ Creighton, *op. cit.* iii. p. 106. The claim here attributed to Boniface of an *absolutist* power 'to bind and loose' finds a historical parallel in an incident related of Clement VII. When he was reproached with the deliberate violation of a solemn treaty, he is said to have replied with a smile, 'The Pope has power to bind and loose.' Froude's *Short Studies*, i. p. 101.

In conclusion, it may be observed that any writer who feels earnestly on religious or moral teaching must have his favourite topics on which he will speak with peculiar fervour and frequency. To borrow an expressive phrase familiar to mathematicians, he must have his 'personal equation,' and this will be displayed on the side both of his predilections and his antipathies. Did space permit, it would be interesting to work out more fully this 'personal equation' in the case of Dante. The results, however, can now be only stated very briefly, as they impress the present writer, under these three heads:—

1. The *Virtue* which commands Dante's special admiration is certainly *Humility*. Though this may seem at first sight surprising, it is true, and it is, perhaps, due to his consciousness, more than once acknowledged, that his own besetting sin was Pride. In the sublime hymn addressed to the Virgin in *Par.* xxxiii, she is 'Umile ed alta più che creatura¹.' When Beatrice went forth abroad she was 'crowned and clothed with humility².' 'God has taken her to the heaven of humility where Mary is³.' Scores of similar passages might be adduced⁴.

2. The *Vice* for which Dante has the most profound contempt is *Avarice*, or perhaps the more comprehensive vice which he describes as 'Cupidigia,' or Covetousness, 'the evil which possesses the whole world,' as he says in *Purg.* xx. 8⁵. In the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, the *De Monarchia*, and, above all, in the *Convito*, esp. IV. xi–xiii, in passage after passage he exhausts the language of scorn and contempt for this mean and foolish and grovelling vice, as he regards it⁶.

¹ l. 2. Comp. S. Bonaventura, *Speculum B. M. V.* Lect. x: 'Ancilla Domini qua nulla *humilior* unquam fuit, nec est, nec erit in aeternum.' The same is insisted on by S. Bernard in his Sermons in passages too numerous to quote. So again Richard of S. Victor, 'Maria humillima fuit omnium qui fuerunt in terra, ideo ad hoc sublimata,' &c., *Expos. in Cant.* xxxix (tom. iii. p. 543 B).

² *V. N.* § xxvi. l. 12.

³ § xxxv. l. 44.

⁴ E. g. (*inter alia*) *V. N.* § xxi. l. 17; xxiii. ll. 66, 151; xxvi. l. 42; xxxii. l. 61.

⁵ Compare the fierce apostrophe to the 'Maladetta lupa' in ll. 10 *seqq.* with *Inf.* i. 49, 50, and 97–99; and with ll. 13–15 compare *Inf.* i. 109–111.

⁶ See also the *Canzone* X ('Doglia mi reca,' &c.).

Among other indications of his contempt it is to be noted that the spirits guilty of this sin are, both in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, represented as being unrecognizable. In the *Inferno*, vii. 49, Dante says to Virgil, when witnessing the punishment of the prodigals and avaricious, that he surely ought to be able to recognize some of these, especially among the great crowd of Popes, Cardinals, and other tonsured sinners, who were defiled with these vices in the world. But Virgil replies that this expectation is vain, since this senseless life which made them so brutish has darkened them beyond all possibility of recognition. The kindred vice of Simony is treated with similar circumstances of contempt, the victims being planted head downwards, with only their writhing feet above the ground; their faces can never be seen. So even in Purgatory those who are doing penance for this sin are lying grovelling with their faces upon the earth (*Purg.* xix. 72, 94), chained and bound hands and feet, incapable of motion (ll. 124-6)¹. Such is the just recompense of the gaze that was always in life fixed upon things of earth, of those 'qui terrena sapiunt.' 'That which is wrought by avarice is here declared by these spirits thus turned downwards, and no more bitter punishment is found upon the Mount of Purgatory' (ll. 115-120)².

3. The *practical doctrine*, if it may so be described, on which Dante dwells with the most fervent enthusiasm is this:—That the supreme and all-embracing condition of perfection, intellectual and moral, as also of personal happiness, is to be found in the complete union and fusion of man's will with the will of God. There is a singularly beautiful passage in *Par.* iii, in which Dante asks a spirit in one of the lower spheres of heaven whether they do not long for a higher

¹ A curious detail is added in *Purg.* xx. 7-9, that the prostrate forms of the Avaricious were lying so near the edge of the precipice that there was no room for Dante to pass round outside them.

² Benvenuto, commenting on *Par.* viii. 76, considers that Dante has been as much too severe in delineating the character of King Robert as Petrarch (from motives of gratitude) had been too eulogistic, 'Dantes vero nimis culpatur eum ab avaritia, quam ipse habuit nimis odio.' It is perhaps worth noting that Coleridge in his *Lectures* (p. 75) observes that Shakespeare has never delineated Avarice.

place and for a nearer and fuller vision of God. At this the spirit and those around her smiled at first, and then replied:— 'Brother, the power of love sets our wills at rest, and makes us wish only for that we have, and not thirst for anything else. If we desired a higher place, our wills would be discordant with His will who separates us thus. That is impossible in these spheres. It is the very essence of this blessed existence to hold ourselves within the Divine Will whereby all our wills are made one. . . . In His Will is our peace¹.'

Lastly, in the concluding Canto of the *Paradiso*—one of the most astonishing achievements of poetic genius and religious fervour to be found in all literature—there occurs that marvellous passage in which Dante describes how, in a moment of ecstatic vision, and by a sort of lightning flash of intuition², even the sublime mystery of the Trinity in Unity seemed to become intelligible to him. But alas! (to borrow the language of Wordsworth), 'The vision splendid' soon 'fades into the light of common day.'

The unique experience of that supreme moment could never be recalled or communicated³. But it is most instructive and significant to note that the only impression which it left behind was this: that his desires and will had then fallen into entire unison with 'that Love that moves the Sun and all the stars.'

And with these words the Divine poem ends. And the sum and crown of all Dante's religious teaching is the grand truth that the complete merging of man's will in

¹ A similar sentiment is put into the mouth of the Emperor Justinian in *Par.* vi. 118-126, and a still closer parallel to the present passage is found in *Par.* xx. 136-138. Compare the paraphrase of the third petition of the Lord's Prayer in *Purg.* xi. 10-12:—

'Come del suo voler gli angeli tuoi
Fan sacrificio a te, cantando *Osanna*,
Così facciano gli uomini de' suoi.'

Add also *Par.* xxxii. 55-57.

² 'la mia mente fu percossa
Da un fulgore, in che sua voglia venne.' (*Par.* xxxiii. 140, 1.)

³ This was a common experience in Paradise. See *Par.* i. 5, 6; x. 46, 70-73; and *Ep.* x. §§ 28, 29, &c.

the will of God is not only the essential condition of inward peace, but also that of intellectual and spiritual enlightenment. 'If a man will to do His will he shall know of the doctrine.'

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

SINCE the above pages were printed, a friend has pointed out to me that I have probably gone too far in minimizing the recognition by Dante of the penal element in Purgatorial punishment [i.e. 'Satisfactio']. As I have admitted that Dante allowed *some* degree of this, however subordinate it may be, it would seem to follow: (1) That in so far as the punishment is penal, it would be as amenable to mitigation by pious prayers in Purgatory as in Ante-Purgatory (see pp. 52, 55); and (2) That in the cases of Forese Donati and Dante's ancestor Alighieri this aspect of their punishment need not be wholly excluded (see p. 54 n.).

II. BEATRICE ¹

‘Guardaci ben, ben sem, ben sem Beatrice.’

Purg. xxx. 73.

SYNOPSIS

EXTENSIVE literature of the controversy respecting Beatrice—Theories fall under three main types, Historical, Ideal, Symbolical; and their adherents, Realists, Idealists, Symbolists respectively—These terms explained—The last-named admits of great variety in the interpretation of the ‘Symbol.’

I. SYMBOLIST THEORIES. Boccaccio first and only authority for Beatrice Portinari—Unintelligent scepticism of Filelfo—Biscioni first Symbolist—Later Symbolist theories of Rossetti and Gietmann—Analysis of contents of *Vita Nuova* in connexion with the latter, as the most typical exponent of the theory—Other Symbolist theories briefly explained—Aroux—Scartazzini (whose opinions have varied considerably)—Perez—Writer in *Quarterly Review*, July 1896.

II. IDEALIST THEORIES. Bartoli—Renier—Idealization of Woman in the poetic schools of Provence, Sicily, Bologna—But always in connexion with some real person—Hard facts idealized and allegorized in a high degree; e.g. the treatment by Dante of the date of Beatrice's death—Hence a most important argument for its being an historical fact, and she a real person—Common objections to the historical character of the *Vita Nuova* answered.

III. REALIST THEORY. List of some of its most distinguished adherents—Reasons for not distrusting Boccaccio's statement—Allegory without basis of fact an anachronism in thirteenth century, and scouted by Dante himself—Dante's constant habit of allegorizing real persons and events—Similarly other contemporary poets—Comparison of Dante's devotion to Beatrice, and that of Petrarch to Laura—Multitude of small and insignificant details in the life of Beatrice—References to her as a real person

¹ Reprinted (with additions) from the *Edinburgh Review* for July 1891.

by Cino da Pistoia—Definite place assigned to her by Dante in Paradise among real persons—Modification of the Realist Theory by Scartazzini and others, that Beatrice was real, but *not* Beatrice Portinari—Examination of Scartazzini's fifteen arguments for this.

CONCLUSION. Large element of truth both in the Idealist and Symbolist theories, but not the whole truth—Every theory has its difficulties, but those of the Realist the least formidable.

THE recent occurrence of the six-hundredth anniversary of the death of Beatrice, which took place, as Dante distinctly states in the *Vita Nuova*, on a certain day in June 1290, has for some time past imparted renewed activity to the controversy, never wholly dormant, who or what was Beatrice? It is proposed in this Essay to sketch the history and principal phases of this controversy. The literature of the subject is very extensive, and continually growing, each year of late having added several fresh contributions to it. The battle has been waged not only in books but in monographs, pamphlets, and magazine articles, whose name is Legion. The arguments employed are very miscellaneous in character, sometimes turning on minute points and expressions in Dante's own works, and sometimes on *a priori* considerations of probability or propriety in which the 'personal equation' of the controversialist plays an unconsciously disproportionate part. As I am not attempting anything like an exhaustive discussion of the subject or of its copious literature, I propose to examine the principal types under which the different theories may be classed rather than the variations in detail represented by individual writers. Further, while holding a very definite opinion on the subject myself, I do not wish to treat it as a mere partisan, but to present an outline of its history as fairly and impartially as I can. But at the same time it is as well to admit at once that the drift of this discussion will certainly be to vindicate the existence of a literal Beatrice, and to rescue her from the limbo of non-entity to which she has sometimes lately been dismissed by

the ingenuity of modern criticism. In this she does but share the fate of very many others who have had the misfortune to live at some distance from the nineteenth century.

A brief explanation to obviate misunderstanding is desirable. When we speak of the denial of the existence of Beatrice, we do not, of course, mean that it is denied that a person of the name of Beatrice Portinari may have lived, and no doubt some time died, at Florence; but it *is* denied that the Beatrice of Dante,

‘Di cui la fama ancor nel mondo dura,
E durerà quanto ’l mondo lontana,’

the Beatrice of the *Vita Nuova*, and still more the Beatrice of the *Divina Commedia*, concerning whom Dante has amply redeemed his promise that he would ‘say of her that which was never said of any woman,’ it is denied, and nowadays very commonly denied, by some that this Beatrice had any historical reality whatever, and by others that, even if she had, there was any connexion, except in her fictitious and highly significant name, with that Beatrice Portinari whose lot was cast ‘among the Christians of the thirteenth century’¹. It is in this sense that the denial of the reality of Beatrice is to be understood.

The principal types under which the conflicting theories on this subject fall are three; one of them, however, involves a subdivision on a point of such vital interest that it would perhaps be better to consider them as four in number. It will be convenient to adopt the classification, and to some extent also the nomenclature, suggested by a recent writer and a prominent champion in this controversy, Professor Renier. The three main types may be described as the *historical*, the *ideal*, and the *symbolical* theories, and their advocates may be conveniently referred to as the Realists, the Idealists, and the Symbolists, respectively. The first type scarcely needs explanation, or at any rate it would not do so, but for a very important modification of it recently developed, apparently growing in favour, and at any rate forced into

¹ *Ella fu de’ Cristiani del terzodecimo centinaio.* (V. N. § xxx. l. 12.)

prominence by the powerful advocacy of Dr. Scartazzini. The Realists (properly so called) maintain that the Beatrice of Dante was none other than the historical Beatrice Portinari, transfigured by degrees 'from glory to glory' in the imagination of the poet, till her image becomes little short of divine, and almost justifies the literal application to her of the Homeric quotation by which she is honoured in the very beginning of the *Vita Nuova*¹. 'Vedeala di sì nobili e laudibili portamenti, che certo di lei si potea dire quella parola del poeta Omero: "Ella non pareva figliuola d' uomo mortale, ma di Dio"' (§ ii). But there are certain spurious Realists whom we feel tempted to call 'Separatists,' who admit that the Beatrice of Dante was a real contemporary person whom Dante loved, perhaps called Beatrice, perhaps not; but maintain that she was in any case a separate person from Beatrice Portinari: admitting, however, that beyond that negative assertion nothing more can now be known, or even guessed, concerning her². We shall say a few words as to this fourth type of theorists later on, but meanwhile let it be understood that we reserve the title of Realists for those who hold the main incidents recorded of Beatrice by Dante to be substantially true, or at least founded upon fact, and moreover as having occurred in reference to Beatrice, daughter of Folco Portinari, however much she herself, and even some of the events recorded of her, may have been transfigured and idealized in the glowing imagination of the poet.

The distinction intended by the terms *ideal* and *symbolical*, as employed by Professor Renier, is as follows. In the former case the poet is supposed to form an ideally perfect conception of his subject, whatever it may be (in this case womanhood), and when his picture is complete he attaches a name to it. That name may be more or less appropriate or descriptive, but has no relation to any existing being or other entity. The process would be precisely what is described by

¹ From *Il. xxiv.* 259. On the subject of this and other quotations from Homer in Dante see *Studies in Dante*, i. pp. 10, 11.

² This view is maintained also by Tartarini.

Aristotle in the *Poetics* c. ix, when he says: *συστήσαντες τὸν μῦθον διὰ τῶν εἰκότων, οὕτω τὰ τυχόντα ὀνόματα ὑποτιθέασιν*. The idea and the representation of the idea are so far identified that they have no separate existence. A familiar example of the process would be the construction of an ideal state as in Plato, Sir Thomas More, Bacon, &c., which we may call a Republic, or a Utopia, or a New Atlantis, or whatever else we please, but which does not profess to have any reality corresponding to it in the nature of things. According to this explanation, the Beatrice of Dante is merely 'la donna idealizzata'¹, 'the ideal of womanhood,' the 'ewig-Weibliche,' the embodiment (we ought perhaps hardly to say 'incarnation') of female perfection, not realized, and never to be realized, on this earth. For around this ideal is shed

'A light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration and the poet's dream.'

This is what is meant by the 'Idealist' theory respecting Beatrice. The most distinguished advocate of this view is Professor Bartoli, and it is strongly maintained also by Professor Renier himself.

Finally we have what may be called, for want of a better name, the *symbolical* theory. The symbol (as the term is here employed) is a pure invention of the imagination—an arbitrarily chosen figure or type under which something else is represented, the thing so represented being the sole reality. This is, of course, a very common and familiar process in poetry. Thus the Church in the Apocalypse is depicted under the symbol or figure of 'the Lamb's wife'; or in the Song of Solomon (according to the current explanation in Dante's time) as 'the Beloved.' Again, in the great Mystic Vision in the *Purgatorio*, the Church on earth is presented under the 'symbol' of a car, led by Christ under the 'symbol' of a gryphon. We can see that in all these cases we have in the 'symbol' no relation to any corresponding object existing outside the poet's or seer's imagination. Just such a 'symbol'

¹ 'Semplicemente incarnazione di qualità naturali alla donna' (Renier, *Gior. Stor.* ii. p. 390).

is the Beatrice of Dante according to this class of theorists—a symbol having no historical basis whatever, except, perhaps, to this extent: that some are ready to allow that an actual person may in the first instance have turned the poet's thoughts into this channel, and may have thus suggested the *form* of the symbol, and possibly even the *name* finally attached to it. Some would go a step further, and admit that Beatrice Portinari herself may have (so to speak) first flashed the ideal into Dante's mind¹, though all the details concerning her in the *Vita Nuova* are purely fictitious, and her historical character entirely vanishes the moment she appears in the pages of Dante. Her name is nothing but a peg on which to hang the web woven by the poet's imagination, like those of the fictitious personages of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. In that case it becomes a question of very little interest or importance whether the germ or prototype of such a symbol existed in the flesh or not, and whether, if so, she was Beatrice Portinari or any one else. Our interest in her is gone, and there is also gone with it much of our living interest in Dante himself, since he too fades back with his unsubstantial companion into the region of shadows; and as regards a large portion of his life—and that portion, too, which comes nearest to our personal interests and sympathies—instead of 'a man of like passions with ourselves,' *stat magni nominis umbra*.

The first two theories thus sketched—those of the Realists and Idealists—obviously admit of very little variety of detail; but with that of the Symbolists this is not the case. There is room for great difference of opinion as to the interpretation of the symbol; and, as a matter of fact, the upholders of this theory, who are a numerous, and, it would seem, an increasing body, are by no means agreed upon this point, as we shall see presently.

The main facts of the problem are briefly these. Dante himself tells us in the *Vita Nuova* that he met Beatrice when he was nine years old, and she a year younger, and that ever

¹ This is in fact Prof. Bartoli's latest view, as is explained by a quotation *inf.* p. 151.

thereafter she exercised a commanding influence on his life, though he very seldom met her—still seldomer spoke to her. Her early death, in June 1290, plunged him into inconsolable grief, till at last he resolved not to speak or write of her any more until he should be able to 'treat more worthily of her,' and then he hoped to 'say of her that which was never said of any woman¹.' Many years elapsed, during which the *Convito* and other prose works were written in which Beatrice plays no part, and then, in the closing years of his life, this magnificent promise was amply fulfilled by the composition of the *Divina Commedia*, containing what might almost be called the apotheosis of Beatrice. Dante, it is to be observed, never mentions the family name of Beatrice, and even her Christian name is introduced in such mysterious language that it has been thought to disguise rather than reveal her real name².

The early, and in some cases nearly contemporary, commentators afford us on this, as on most other subjects, no definite information. At last Boccaccio comes forward, about forty years after Dante's death and seventy after that of Beatrice, with the definite statement that she was the daughter of Folco Portinari and the wife of Simone de' Bardi. Later writers commonly repeated—we can hardly say confirmed—this statement. It rests, and no doubt now always must rest, on the sole and unsupported statement of Boccaccio, whatever may be the value to be attached to that statement. It is hardly necessary to point out that its acceptance is perfectly consistent with 'symbolical' or 'ideal' interpretations of the nature of Beatrice; the former in particular finding place in most of the early commentators, none of whom deny, and many distinctly imply, her real existence. The fact is they are less careful to insist on the literal than the allegorical Beatrice simply because it probably never occurred to them that any one would think of denying the former: in short, *ça*

¹ 'Di non dir più di questa benedetta, infino a tanto ch' io non potessi più degnamente trattare di lei . . . Sicchè, se piacere sarà di Colui, per cui tutte le cose vivono, che la mia vita per alquanti anni duri, spero di dire di lei quello che mai non fu detto d' alcuna' (*V. N.* § xliii).

² See *inf.* p. 91.

va sans dire. But even when dwelling on the allegorical sense they sometimes indirectly betray what we may call their fundamental and axiomatic belief in the literal Beatrice; thus, for instance, Jacopo della Lana, in his Introduction to *Purg.* Canto xxvii, says that Beatrice 'figura Teologia,' but on xxxii. 2 he remarks that 'dieci anni erano passati che Beatrice era morta.' We must not therefore be influenced by the quotation from these 'patristic' commentators of highly allegorical passages relating to Beatrice, much less by any *argumentum e silentio* respecting her literal existence that might be drawn from such passages¹.

The first writer to hint a doubt on the subject is Filelfo, in his highly imaginative and utterly untrustworthy *Vita Dantis*, composed in the latter half of the fifteenth century, but not published until 1828, and now rather difficult to meet with. He boldly says that Beatrice was a pure myth, just as real as Pandora, or any other such fiction of the poet's brain². The whole story of Dante's childish love is an invention of Boccaccio—in short he maintains, 'fictam esse rem omnem.' Strictly speaking, therefore, Filelfo scarcely falls under any of our three classes. Beatrice does not 'symbolize' anything: she is too arbitrary and purposeless a poetic fiction to be described as an 'ideal.' But Filelfo is mentioned thus at the

¹ The following passage from Benvenuto throws a curious light on the logical processes of his mind:—'Nec videatur tibi indignum, lector, quod Beatrix mulier carnea accipiatur a Dante pro sacra theologia. Nonne Rachel, secundum historicam veritatem fuit pulchra uxor Iacob, summe amata ab eo, . . . et tamen anagogice figurat vitam contemplativam quam Iacob mirabiliter amavit, sicut autor ipse scribit Paradisi xxii capitulo, ubi describit contemplationem sub figura scalae. Et si dicis: non credo quod Beatrix vel Rachel sumantur unquam spiritualiter, dicam quod contra negantes principia non est amplius disputandum!' (*Comento*, vol. i. p. 89.)

² This statement should, perhaps, be modified by a reference to a very extraordinary passage in the Commentary of Francesco da Buti on *Purg.* xxvii. 36. He there asserts that Beatrice signifies Theology, which was the true object of Dante's love. Theology, however, is typified by one Beatrice, who lived about 1100, and was the daughter of an emperor of Constantinople, who married an Italian baron and became the mother of the Countess Matilda, the same whom Dante introduces in the next Canto! This Madonna Beatrice (adds Buti) died before 1116, and was buried in the cathedral of Pisa, and 'her sepulchre is with us unto this day.' It should be added that Buti was a Pisan, and his commentary the substance of lectures delivered at Pisa.

outset as being the first to hint at any sceptical suggestion on this subject, and as making it, when he does so, in its most extreme and uncompromising form.

The first, however, to work out a 'symbolical' theory, properly so called, was Biscioni, in his *Prefazione alle Prose di Dante*, &c. (Florence, 1723). He maintains that Dante's love is purely spiritual or intellectual, and that its true object is Wisdom (*Sapienza*), which is presented under the symbol of Beatrice. He does not think it necessary to deny that a person of this name may have existed at Florence, may have been known to Dante, and may have suggested the name, and to some extent the form, of the symbol, though this is not his own opinion. But he denies that any of the statements of the *Vita Nuova* are to be literally understood, and says that the term 'Nuova' is applied to this life to express 'sua eccellenza o rarità.' Dante's love for Beatrice means his devotion to wisdom, just as in the *Convito* Dante himself declares that his affection for the 'Gentil Donna' is to be understood of the pursuit of Philosophy. The maidens who are described as accompanying Beatrice are the several Sciences, the handmaids, as it were, of Wisdom. The salute of Beatrice implies a readiness and capacity for Knowledge on the part of its votary; the refusal of her salute the difficulties met with in its pursuit¹. The death of the father of Beatrice² represents the loss of Dante's master, presumably Brunetto Latini, though his name is not mentioned by Biscioni, and he offers this suggestion with some hesitation. The highest development of Wisdom being Theology, Beatrice often definitely represents Theology, just as the 'Gentil Donna' of the *Convito* represents a lower development of Wisdom, viz. Moral Philosophy; and so 'le due donne di Dante sono una medesima cosa fra loro,' viz. *Sapienza*.

The principal arguments on which Biscioni relies may be briefly stated as follows:—(1) The improbability of Dante contracting a lifelong affection at the tender age of nine. (2) Beatrice is called 'donna della mente' (*V. N.* § ii), and is therefore 'ideale, non vero.' (3) The exalted language which

¹ See *V. N.* §§ ii, x, xi.

² *Ib.* § xxii.

is applied to her even in the *Vita Nuova*, such as 'miracolo la cui radice è solamente la mirabile Trinitade' (§ xxx, *sub fin.*), and the still stronger expressions used concerning her in the *Divina Commedia*, with the very exalted position assigned to her in heaven. (4) He lays stress on the often quoted and certainly very difficult passage in *Vita Nuova*, § ii, 'la quale fu chiamata da molti Beatrice, i quali non sapeano che si chiamare.' (See *inf.* p. 91.) (5) He insists on the symbolical character of the (in some sense) antithetical figure of the 'gentil donna' in the *Convito*. (It is, however, by no means necessarily to be admitted or assumed that the 'gentil donna' had no relation to any existing person.) (6) He even quotes with approbation the astounding theory or speculation of Francesco da Buti in his Commentary, which has been already referred to *sup.* p. 85 (note). (7) Lastly, he argues that the reproaches of Beatrice in the *Purgatorio* relate to Dante's unfaithfulness to Theology as shown in the pursuit of worldly philosophy, and perhaps even in a sinful life. (This explanation however is in no way inconsistent with the Realist theory.)

The general scope of Gabriel Rossetti's treatment of Dante's works and their contents, as well as those of other poets of that age, is well known¹. He held that the Ghibellines formed a society having a secret language intelligible to its members only, by means of a code almost as elaborate as a modern book of nautical signals or telegraphic addresses². The mention of a few of these key words will be sufficient to throw light upon the position supposed to be occupied in this system by the symbol 'Beatrice³.' Thus 'Death' means Guelfism, 'Life,' Ghibellinism; and consequently the *Vita Nuova* means the new course of Dante's political life

¹ Not to be confused with his distinguished son 'Dante Gabriel' who took a very different view of the case (see *inf.* p. 130).

² This theory is irreverently termed by Witte a 'Spitzbubenlexikon' (*D. F.* i. p. 99). There is an interesting Essay which may be referred to in A. H. Hallam's *Remains*, &c. on the *Spirito Antipapale* of Rossetti.

³ These may be taken either from the *Disamina del Sistema Allegorico della Divina Commedia*, cap. ii. (*Comento Analitico*, vol. ii. p. 354, &c.), or from the *Spirito Antipapale*, *passim*, and esp. c. x.

with Ghibelline sympathies¹. 'Amor' (which he does not fail to note is an anagram for *Roma*, and which in its longer form *Amore* may be read *Amo Re*) denotes devotion to the Imperial party; 'Salute' means the Emperor. The 'Empire' is also symbolized by 'God'; and the 'Papacy,' in antagonism with it, by 'Satan².' 'Heaven' stands for true 'Political Science'; 'Donna' or 'Madonna' represent 'Podestà Imperiale'; and Beatrice also stands for the ideal of this, or rather, to speak more accurately, the ideal regiment which is traced in the *De Monarchia*, in which a perfect Emperor and a perfect Pope, acting in harmony with one another and each keeping within his proper sphere, should guide the human race to perfect happiness, temporal and eternal³. Since, however, as regards the conduct of this life, the Emperor would be naturally the more prominent figure, Beatrice, or 'Beatitudo nostra,' often appears to stand for this ideal 'Imperial Power.' It is not necessary to go into further detail. It should be added that Rossetti assigns the same allegorical meaning to the writings of Guido Cavalcanti, Guido Guinicelli, Cino da Pistoia, Petrarch, Boccaccio⁴, and many other less known poets⁵, and in particular the 'ladies' extolled by each of these writers—Giovanna (and afterwards Mandetta), by Guido Cavalcanti; Selvaggia, by Cino da Pistoia; Laura, by Petrarch; and Fiammetta, by Boccaccio—are held to be mere symbols of similar significance to the Beatrice of Dante. He further admits that Dante may have

¹ See *Com. Anal.* ii. p. 355.

² Hence Rossetti's grotesque reading and interpretation of *Inf.* vii. 1, viz. 'Pap' è Satan, Pap' è Satan,' &c. l (*Disamina*, &c. pp. 465, &c.)

³ See *De Mon.* III. xvi. 75 seqq.

⁴ In the case of Boccaccio not only is the *Decameron* so treated, but even his *Vita di Dante*! 'By this (says Mr. Hallam) the additional advantage is gained of rejecting its biographical authority' (p. 271).

⁵ See *Spir. Antip.* c. xx, &c., *Disamina*, &c. in *Com. Anal.* c. v. pp. 364, &c. Rossetti's curious interpretation of *Par.* xxvi. 133-6 is too good to lose. Reading 'I' in l. 134, and 'El' in l. 136, he explains the former as standing for 'Imperator,' and the latter for 'Enrico Lussemburghese'; and so the whole passage means, being interpreted, that before Dante began his poem ('Pria ch' io scendessi all' infernale ambascia,' l. 133) the secret symbol of his political sect was changed from 'I' to 'El' in the senses just explained (!). (*Disamina*, &c. p. 488, *Spir. Antip.* pp. 245, &c.)

loved, or feigned to have loved, a Florentine maiden named Beatrice; but that the Beatrice of his writings, both in prose and verse, was a pure symbol or figure, having no more connexion with real life than the *fuia*, or *puttana*, or *meretrice*, who took her place on the deserted and distorted car in the vision in *Purg.* xxxii. He thinks (like some other writers on this subject) that her connexion with Beatrice Portinari is summarily disproved by such shallow arguments as these:— 'In what history is it recorded that the Pope carried away the Empire or the Church from the daughter of Messer Folco Portinari, or the wife of Messer Simone de' Bardi¹?' We may put side by side with this a no less surprising would-be demonstration of Gietmann (of whom more presently) that it is inconceivable, and, if conceivable, would indicate an utter want of taste and sense of poetic propriety on the part of Dante, that he should make Beatrice Portinari a symbol of Theology, or Revealed Religion, because, forsooth, she was an undistinguished member of ordinary Florentine society of the period, without even any recorded literary tastes, much less any scholastic or theological knowledge, or any special training in divinity²! Such arguments as these, though, of course, it is not pretended that they are all we have to meet, are commonly and, indeed, prominently put forward; yet they seem really to establish nothing more than the inability of their nineteenth century authors to enter into the spirit or comprehend the modes of thought of the fourteenth century³.

¹ See *Spir. Antip.* p. 123. Similarly in *La Beatrice di Dante* (see note 3), p. 31: 'Di dove dunque è mai sbucata cotesta fanciulla fiorentina, figlia di messer Folco Portinari e poi moglie di messer Simone de' Bardi, della quale in quel libretto non è la minima idea, il minimissimo sentore?'

² Gietmann, *op. cit.* p. 1.

³ There is another work by Rossetti, now very rare, *La Beatrice di Dante* (London, 1842), in which he maintains that the purely allegorical character of Beatrice is fully established by the admission and declaration of Dante himself. '*La Beatrice della Vita Nuova è una figura allegorica per confessione e dimostrazione di Dante medesimo*' is the title prefixed to the work. He declares that 'the *Vita Nuova* is the Enigma of which the *Convito* is the Solution' (p. 12). The *Vita Nuova* is the Initiation or Regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*) of Dante (p. 15). It might have been entitled 'Iniziazione di Dante Alighieri: l' un titolo vale l' altro, siccome *iniziazione* vale *rigenerazione*.' He also adopts the singular view that the 'gentil donna' of the *Convito* is not the same as the person so described in the *Vita*

The most recent, and in some respects the most hardy and thoroughgoing in his interpretation of points of detail, among the advocates of the 'symbolical' theory is Gietmann, a member of the Society of Jesus, whose views are set forth in a work published in 1889, entitled *Beatrice, Geist und Kern der Dante'schen Dichtungen*. His general conclusion differs from any of those which we have hitherto considered. It is thus summarized by himself in his Preface (p. iv):—

'Our object is, in a word, to prove that Dante's love for the daughter of Folco Portinari probably belongs to the number of those beautiful dreams which have been woven round the whole of the poet's life by the hands of his interpreters and biographers, but that in any case the primary and the real subject of his poetry is nothing else than the *Ideal Church*, the "Bride," or the "Beloved," of Scripture,' as represented by Solomon, S. Paul, and S. John ¹.

A little later on Gietmann adds that he does not mean to deny that a person called Beatrice Portinari once existed, but she is certainly not the subject of Dante's writings, and *that*, as he justly adds, is the sole ground on which she has any interest for us now; the information, moreover, that has reached us as to any affection on the part of Dante for any such historical person is almost, if not altogether, undeserving of credit. The working out by Gietmann of his theory in its application to the details of the *Vita Nuova* lands him in some very startling results, which, however, he does not hesitate to put forth and maintain as being the logical consequences of his theory. We may regard him, then, as

Nuova, but is Beatrice herself, and that Beatrice in both works, under her own name in the *Vita Nuova*, and as the anonymous 'gentil donna' in the *Convito*, is the symbol of 'Philosophy': . . . 'per far sì che Beatrice e Filosofia si confondessero di modo da divenire una sola fantastica personificazione' . . . 'Beatrice è ivi figura della Filosofia, e . . . essa è perciò donna figurata e non donna reale' (pp. 18, 20). Compare the conclusion of Biscioni mentioned *supra*, p. 86.

¹ As compared with these Scriptural parallels, it is a serious peculiarity of Dante's representation that the same symbol is described as being also the object of his own heart's affection. This is not overlooked by Gietmann, who suggests (p. 67) that in this he would have found a precedent in the poetry of the Minnesingers, and that at any rate he had a type nearer at hand in the Allegorical Marriage of S. Francis with Poverty, who had originally been the Bride of Christ. (See *Par.* xi.)

the most important and most systematic advocate of the Symbolist view, and since so much in regard to this class of theories depends on the interpretation of the *Vita Nuova*, it will be well to take the opportunity of recounting its main incidents step by step with Gietmann's explanations.

It should be noted in passing that, speaking roughly, the main difficulty of the Symbolist and Idealist theories lies in the apparently hard facts and often minute personal details occurring in the *Vita Nuova*, whereas the main difficulty of the Realists lies in the mystical language applied to Beatrice, and the exalted position assigned to her in the *Divina Commedia*.

The *Vita Nuova* begins, as is well known, with an account of the first meeting of Beatrice and Dante, then aged eight and nine years respectively. He describes the immediate and overwhelming effect which her presence at once, and for ever afterwards, produced upon him, and he introduces her Christian name, and her Christian name only¹, in that mysterious and highly ambiguous sentence which plays so important a part in the arguments of those who deny the literal sense—'There appeared to my eyes the glorious lady of my mind'—'la donna della mia mente'² (not 'cuore'), an expression much relied upon, as implying unreality at the very outset—'who was called by many Beatrice, *i quali non sapeano che si chiamare*.' These last words are very difficult to translate³. It seems best to take them (with Witte, D'Ancona, Scartazzini, and others) to mean literally—'Many called her Beatrice, who did not know what they were calling

¹ See *infra*, p. 125, n.

² E.g. by Rossetti, *Spir. Antip.* p. 122, where, quoting this among other passages, he says, 'il pesar bene le parole di Dante fa svanire quel *fantasma mentale* ch' ei produsse.'

³ It has even been proposed to escape the difficulty by an alteration of the text. Among the *lectiones faciliores* thus proposed are *e quali* for *i quali* and *si* for *si*. The same construction however occurs in Boccaccio, *Decameron*, *Giorn.* iii. *Nov.* 10: 'nè per altro il nome, per lo quale voi mi chiamate, da tale che *seppe ben che si dire* mi fu imposto,' which must surely mean 'nor was the name by which you call me given me by one who knew rightly what he was saying.' Some idea of the amount of discussion to which this passage has given rise may be gained by referring to the elaborate note in D'Ancona's Edition of the *Vita Nuova*, pp. 15, &c.

her,' i.e. who knew not the deep significance and full appropriateness of the name. Rightly was she called Beatrice; she was *κάρι' ἐπώνυμος*, just as Homer says of the daughter of Alcinous, 'Ἀρήτη δ' ὄνομ' ἐστὶν ἐπώνυμος'¹, and as Esau declares of his brother, 'rightly is he called Jacob,' though (as we might add) they who so called him were not conscious how appropriate the name was. Dante is fond of thus tracing in the old Hebrew fashion the significance of names. Thus in *Vita Nuova*, § xxiv, he discourses (with somewhat reckless etymology) on the meaning of the name of one of the companions of Beatrice, 'Primavera, cioè *prima verrà*.' And again in *Par.* xii. 79-81, speaking of the parents of S. Dominic,

'O padre suo veramente Felice!
O madre sua veramente Giovanna,
Se interpretata val come si dice!'

Gietmann, like other Symbolists, insists that it is altogether unnatural and improbable that a boy of nine years should have experienced such a vehement and enduring emotion.

Here and elsewhere we must protest at once against applying the test of mere ordinary experience to a case like that of Dante. It is quite beside the point. In this and in many other aspects of Dante's character, it must be borne in mind that we are dealing with an altogether exceptional nature, exceptional not only in genius but also on its sensational, emotional, and imaginative side. This meeting with Beatrice fell like a spark on highly inflammable materials already prepared, and we need not therefore marvel so much how 'great a fire a little matter kindled,' or, in the language of Dante himself, how

'Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda.' (*Par.* i. 34.)

There is surely nothing more 'unnatural' in what here purports to be recorded of Dante as a boy of nine—this infant giant in the sphere of Poetry—than the prodigies of youthful and almost infantile precocity recorded as undoubted facts of such giants in the sphere of music as

¹ *Odyss.* vii. 54.

Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, or, we might add, some of the almost incredible statements of early intellectual development related of himself by John Stuart Mill in his *Autobiography*. In any case I venture to submit that the literal meaning here offers an explanation much less difficult and less unnatural than the symbolical. For what had Dante, or any other boy at the age of nine, to do with ecstatic visions of the 'Ideal Church'? I prefer to face the improbability of supposing that a boy of that age was thus affected, or, at any rate, in after years believed that he thus early began to be so affected, by the vision of an actual girl in flesh and blood. To protest against this as absurd, and to ask us to believe the other alternative, is rather like 'straining out the gnat and swallowing down the camel.'

Passing on now to the most prominent and striking incidents of the *Vita Nuova* as they follow in the order of the narrative, we are first arrested by the curious episode of the lady rather unceremoniously described as 'the screen' ('schermo') (§ v). Dante, while gazing at Beatrice saying her prayers in church, and while he presumably ought to have been doing the same, pretended to be looking at another lady who was in a direct line between them, and this misled the gossips of Florence into supposing that this second lady was the real object of his attention, a mistake which Dante found it convenient to encourage, not without causing some annoyance to the lady who served as 'the screen'.¹ This continued for some months, and even years, and Dante

¹ A recent writer (Scherillo), who can at least claim to be original in his ingenuity, suggests that the 'lady of the screen' was herself Beatrice Portinari, and that the real and unknown Beatrice was the lady beyond her, 'and that Dante worked the "screen" deception so successfully as to have misled not only the contemporary gossips but Boccaccio himself through them.' But the departure of the 'screen' lady into a far country (§ vii), and her long and apparently final settlement there (see § ix, 'so che il suo rivenire non sarà'), necessitating the employment of a new screen (§§ ix and x), are supposed by Scherillo to indicate the marriage of Beatrice Portinari with Simone de' Bardi. *Quattro Saggi*, &c., pp. 70, 71. At the same time Scherillo declares:—'Io piglio alla parola il racconto della *Vita Nuova*' (p. 60): qualifying this, however, afterwards by saying that he differs from most critics, 'quando oltre alla realtà della Beatrice essi ne ammettono anche la storicità' (p. 61).

confesses to having addressed some verses to this lady, and to having attempted further mystification of his friends by composing a *sirventese*, in which sixty of the most beautiful maidens of Florence¹, including Beatrice and 'the screen,' were celebrated. According to Gietmann, 'the lady of the screen' represents the ministering priesthood which comes between the faithful and the invisible and ideal Church. The sixty maidens are thought by Gietmann to be nothing but a reminiscence of the sixty queens mentioned in the Song of Solomon (vi. 8). The full passage runs: 'There are sixty queens, and eighty concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one².' This explanation of the choice of the actual number sixty (anticipated, we may note, in the much earlier work of Aroux) is certainly ingenious, and may even be perfectly true, without its amounting to any sort of proof that Beatrice is a mere symbol and not a real person.

Next, in § vii we are told that 'the lady of the screen' left the city, and in §§ viii and ix that one of the companions of Beatrice died, and that both of these occurrences were the occasion of much sorrow to Dante. Next, that Love appeared in a vision to Dante and ordered him to make a 'screen' of another lady whom he named, and that Dante did so, thereby giving occasion to much unpleasant talk which resulted in the refusal of Beatrice to notice him when they next met (§§ ix and x). All this is intended, according to Gietmann, to indicate, under different images, that the intermediate and visible priesthood had come to occupy too large a place in his heart, so as to divert his thoughts from the ideal and invisible Church; hence in his spiritual development it was expedient that this priesthood should be removed from his sight. It should have been observed that the greeting of Beatrice at their first meeting, mentioned before in § ii, is explained by Gietmann to refer to Dante's traditional, though

¹ It is right to explain that Florence is never mentioned by name in the *Vita Nuova*.

² A passage as a matter of fact familiar to Dante, since it is quoted in *Conv.* II. xv (*sub fin.*). The reference to Aroux is to p. 37.

very uncertain, admission in his youth for a brief period to the novitiate of the Franciscan order, by which he thought himself at the time to have reached 'tutti i termini della beatitudine¹.' And, on the other hand, the refusal of her greeting in § x is supposed to indicate Dante's alienation from Theology, through his alleged devotion to secular pursuits and profane Philosophy, an episode which plays so important a part in Dante's history according to some writers, and is as vigorously denied by others.

We must next notice the very remarkable incident of the marriage feast narrated in § xiv. Dante was taken by a friend to witness a gathering of many very beautiful maidens who were assembled, according to the custom of the city, to do honour to a lady who was given in marriage on that same day. Among them he at once beheld Beatrice herself. He was utterly stunned and prostrated at the sight of her, supported himself against a painting that ran round the wall of the room², and ultimately had to be removed by his friend, to whom he addressed the mysterious words: 'I have to-day set my feet on that point of life beyond which he cannot pass who has any thought of retracing his steps.' On this Gietmann remarks that it is utterly impossible to take it literally, as it would make Dante simply contemptible. Here, then, at any rate, he says, we must abandon the literal sense. Rather I should say, here, at any rate, we feel constrained to accept it. If, as is generally supposed, and as I certainly think most probable, Dante here refers to the marriage of Beatrice herself, observe the exquisite tact with which this difficult and delicate subject is handled. The same consideration for the feelings of others which, if the traditional history of Beatrice be true, led him to suppress her actual name, as well as that of the city 'in which God had

¹ *V.N.* § iii. It will be remembered that the incident of the *corda* in *Inf.* xvi. 106 *seqq.* is sometimes explained by a reference to this tradition.

² The very difficult subject of the mocking of Dante by Beatrice, which occurs here, is considered later, p. 126. Tartarini, *op. cit.* pp. 25 *seqq.*, thinks that the refusal of Beatrice's salutation in §§ x and xii implies that she knew of his devotion and reciprocated it; and that her 'gabbo' in § xiv was a 'schermo' on her part to conceal this from the other ladies.

placed her¹, reinforced, moreover, in this particular matter by considerations of artistic propriety also, would prevent his stating directly even the fact of her marriage. Yet, how was such a cardinal event in her history and his own to be entirely ignored? Moreover, when we read thus between the lines can we not better understand the crushing agony which he describes as falling upon him, and the oracular language addressed to his friend? It is also very significantly observed by Dr. Witte, though I am not aware of the grounds on which the curious assertion rests, that according to the custom of Florence, conversely to that now prevailing among ourselves, the companions of a bride at her marriage were always themselves married ladies². If so, the natural inference would be that the occasion was the marriage of Beatrice herself, else she could not have been present. The incident taken literally, and thus interpreted, is one of the most touching, and we may even venture to add, one of the most natural, recorded in the *Vita Nuova*.

What then has Gietmann to offer us as an alternative? Why, that Dante's bewilderment indicates the effect on the soul of its first introduction to the contemplative aspect of theology, and he quotes in illustration similar language of mystical writers like S. Theresa, describing that experience and its overwhelming effects. If any one thinks this a more 'natural' explanation, he is welcome to a subjective conviction, which would probably be argument-proof.

The next great event recorded is the death of the father of Beatrice, 'genitore di tanta meraviglia,' in § xxii. It should

¹ *V. N.* § vi. Compare a similar suppression of the name in § xli, *init.*

² The same assertion is made by Balbo, *Vita di Dante*, bk. I. c. iii. p. 37; but it is denied, as unproved and improbable, by Scartazzini, *Prolegg.* pp. 192, 3. Dean Plumptre considers it to be proved beyond doubt by Dante's use of *donna*, which 'in the recognized use of Italian poetry, as in the speech of common life, was applied to a married woman only' (*Dante*, ii. p. 200 n.). Observe the distinction implied in the Canzone of § xix in the *V. N.* l. 13: '*Donna e donzella amorosa*,' &c. D'Ancona (*V. N.* p. 102) says that he has failed to find any proof of the custom alleged by Balbi, Witte, &c. He quotes several interesting old documents of a sumptuary kind respecting limitations imposed on marriage feasts, in which any such condition as this is conspicuous by absence. Tartarini, *op. cit.* p. 35, also denies it.

be observed in passing that in any case Dante's narrative, whether to be taken literally or not, corresponds most accurately here with literal facts. Folco Portinari did actually die in 1289, the year before the death of Beatrice; the very day of his death is known (December 31). His will is extant (executed January 15, 1287), in which he leaves a legacy of fifty pounds to his daughter Beatrice, wife of Simone de' Bardi¹. He was also the founder of the large Hospital of S. Maria Nuova, at Florence, still existing, and he was buried with the honours of a public funeral². All this agrees exactly with the statement of Dante respecting the father of Beatrice, viz. that he was reputed, and, as Dante adds, very justly reputed, to be a man of great goodness (*buono in alto grado*). The bitter grief of Beatrice at the loss of her father is described, and Dante declares himself to have been crushed with sympathetic sorrow, much intensified by a vivid presentiment that Beatrice herself too would die, followed by a vision of her as actually dead. He was prostrated on a bed of sickness, and then (let us note the particularity of these details) he narrates how he was tended and comforted by a young and gentle lady who was standing beside his sick-bed as he lay sobbing and calling upon death, a lady (as he is careful to add) who was of his very near

¹ Some interesting details of Folco Portinari's will are given by Del Lungo in the *Nuova Antologia* for June, 1890. *Inter alia* we note that he had five sons and six daughters. Of the daughters two were married, Bice and Ravignana. To a son of the latter and to Bice herself, similar legacies are left, from which it is natural to infer that Beatrice had at any rate no son. Folco himself held several public offices. The Portinari were Ghibellines, and Folco leaves as guardian to his children some of the Cerchi, afterwards leaders of the *Bianchi*. To this party belonged also the Falconieri, into which family Ravignana was married, while the Bardi, one of whom was the husband of Beatrice, were strong Guelfs, and later *Neri*. Folco, besides munificently endowing the Hospital of S. Maria Nuova, was able to provide for all the members of his numerous family. Is it possible that Dante's youthful devotion to Beatrice was viewed with disfavour and discouraged on the ground that he was '*puellae sarcinulis impar*'?

² We learn from the inscription upon his tomb in the Church of the Hospital that he was first buried in the Church of S. Nicolas in 1289; next removed to his Hospital in 1472; thence transferred to the Church of S. Matthew in 1735; brought back again to the Hospital '*iussu principis*' in 1783; and finally deposited in the present tomb in the Church of the Hospital in 1845.

kindred (*la quale era meco di propinquissima sanguinità congiunta*, § xxiii). It has been reasonably conjectured that this was his own sister, who was married (as we learn from Boccaccio) to Leon Poggi, and had a son very strongly resembling his uncle, Dante¹. Again we ask, what can be more natural and touching than all this taken literally? Gietmann would have us believe that the death of Beatrice's father is the *rifuto* of Celestine in 1294, and that at the prospect of the imminent ruin of the Church (i.e. the death of Beatrice) some form or type of worldly philosophy offers its aid and support to the perplexed mind of Dante².

Another striking incident is introduced in § xxiv. Dante has once more a sight of Beatrice, on this occasion accompanied, or rather preceded, by a maiden of great beauty, *che fu già molto donna di questo mio primo amico*, i.e. to whom for a long time this first of my friends was much devoted; viz. Guido Cavalcanti. Her name was Giovanna, though she was often and deservedly described as Primavera, both these names having a true significance for one who now appeared as the 'Forerunner' (*prima verrà!*) of Beatrice. Guido, as we know, proved unfaithful to Giovanna, and transferred his poetic devotion to another lady called Mandetta. Dante seems gently and delicately to hint this reproach in the words just quoted, 'fu già molto donna,' &c., as well as in some other somewhat ambiguous words later on in the section³. Now why should not these details be accepted literally (corresponding as they do in several respects with known facts), and if not, what purpose, moral or artistic, is served by this minuteness of imaginary detail? But let us now hear Gietmann again. The reappearance of Beatrice (in § xxiv) after her vision in death (§ xxiii) corresponds with the hopes derived from the accession of Benedict XI in 1304, and his short reign of nine months, after the death of Boniface VIII.

¹ Boccaccio, *Comento*, *Lesione* xxxiii. in ref. to *Inf.* viii. 1.

² Another recent writer of the Symbolist school maintains that the father of Beatrice represents S. Thomas Aquinas!

³ 'Proposi di scriverne per rima al primo mio amico (tacendomi certe parole le quali pareano da tacere). credendo io che ancora il suo core mirasse la beltà di questa Primavera gentile.'

But if the death of Beatrice's father, and the presage of her own imminent death, have reference to the *rifuto* of Celestine in 1294, while the incidents of this chapter relate to the reign of Benedict XI, we have an unexplained interval of ten years, a supposition which, improbable in itself, is made impossible by the marks of time (see § xxiv), which distinctly (and, if Gietmann be right, quite needlessly, and even misleadingly) bring the events of §§ xxiii and xxiv into connexion and proximity¹. Besides, what purpose is served by the introduction of Giovanna, and the references to Guido Cavalcanti? Gietmann says that the former is like Matelda (with whom indeed some have proposed to identify her), and also like the 'lady of the screen' (herself again by Scartazzini identified with Matelda), a symbol of the visible priesthood. But why should this fresh symbol be introduced here? Still more, why should Giovanna and Dante's friend Guido Cavalcanti be dragged in here in such a connexion? Gietmann can only suggest that perhaps Dante wished us to understand that Guido and himself were of one mind in intending all they said or wrote about Giovanna and Beatrice to be equally and purely allegorical. A recent writer has suggested that Giovanna symbolizes Science, and that Dante means that 'Science is to Theology what the Harbinger was to Christ².'

Next, after a few less important sections, we have the crowning event of the death of Beatrice in § xxix. This represents, according to Gietmann, the removal of the Papacy to Avignon by Clement V in the year 1305. Now Dante expressly declares that Beatrice died in June, 1290, and also that she was then twenty-four years of age, statements which, on Gietmann's theory, would be both irrelevant and inappropriate. Further, Dante himself distinctly states³ the *Vita Nuova* to be a work of his youth, i. e. (according to the explanation of the term in *Conv.* IV. xxiv) when he was about

¹ Thus the death of her father is in § xxii; the vision of her death in § xxiii is 'Appresso ciò pochi di'; and her reappearance in § xxiv is again described as 'Appresso questa mia vana imaginazione.'

² *Quarterly Review*, July 1896.

³ *Conv.* I. i.

twenty-five, viz. c. 1290, or soon afterwards. Gietmann is compelled to place its composition, or at any rate that of the last fifteen sections, in the year 1314¹, partly for reasons already implied, and still more on account of the letter which Dante says that he addressed *ai principi della terra*, which Gietmann confidently identifies with that addressed by Dante to the cardinals in conclave at Carpentras, after the death of Clement V, and dated April 30, 1314. The two letters have undoubtedly a remarkable point of coincidence in the opening words, 'Quomodo sedet sola civitas,' &c.² But it is obvious to remark that the repetition of a familiar quotation is a very insufficient ground of identification. A great deal, moreover, turns on the interpretation of the term *principi della terra*, which is assumed by Gietmann and others to refer to the cardinals. This would not be certain, even if we could be sure that the words mean 'princes of the earth.' But this is far from being the case. For Fraticelli takes *terra* as equivalent to *città* or *paese*, a sense which the word very commonly bears³. So also do D. G. Rossetti⁴ and Scartazzini, the latter paraphrasing the words 'i personaggi principali di Firenze.' Moreover, Gabriele Rossetti (*La Beatrice di Dante*, p. 74), even assuming *terra* to mean 'the earth,' makes merry over the idea of Dante writing (not to the cardinals, but) to Germany, France, England, and Spain, to announce the death of the daughter of Folco Portinari. He also equally ridicules the notion that *principi della terra* can refer to the Gonfaloniere and other magistrates of Florence, and asks triumphantly what has become of the letter? But is it not possible that just as the universal desolation of the city at the death of Beatrice is itself a poetic fiction, a form of the

¹ So also does the elder Rossetti in the *Spirito Antipapale*, pp. 159, &c., and for similar reasons.

² Lament. i. 1.

³ This is so in Italian generally (prose and verse), and in Dante it is particularly frequent, though some recent English Translators of Dante do not seem to be aware of it. E.g. *Inf.* x. 2, xxvii. 43 (Forlì), xxxi. 41; *Par.* ix. 92 (Marseilles), &c. See many other instances collected by Scherillo, *op. cit.* pp. 382, 3.

⁴ In *Dante and his Circle* (p. 88) he translates—'Then I, left mourning in this desolate city, wrote unto the principal persons thereof,' &c.

'pathetic fallacy' most common in poetry, even as Shelley describes it,

"Thus all things were
Transformed into the agony which I wore :'

or Crabbe—

'All these were sad in nature, or they took
Sadness from him, the likeness of his look
And of his mind'—

is it not possible, I say, that the letter itself was an artificial and ideal composition like the sonnets and *canzoni* by which it is surrounded, and not, any more than they, a formal document, 'signed, sealed, and delivered' to the persons to whom it purports to be addressed? Or again, even if all this were ever so formally carried out, why may not the letter have disappeared like the *sirventese* of § vi, and many other similar compositions?

But in any case Gietmann asks us to suppose that it was written in 1314, whereas the death of Beatrice, to which it refers, took place, as Dante states, in 1290, and even the allegorical equivalent, as explained by Gietmann, occurred in 1305. If so, why was it composed either twenty-four or nine years after the event to which it refers, especially as Dante (very misleadingly) states at the beginning of § xxxi that it was composed when the death of Beatrice was quite recent¹?

Moreover, to make such a theory for a moment tenable, it becomes necessary to invent a special theory as to the composition of the *Vita Nuova*. Clearly it cannot all be referred to so late a date. For in the year 1314 Dante was close upon fifty, when a person, however anxious to consider himself still young, could scarcely speak of himself as 'dinanzi all' entrata di mia gioventute,' and this is what Dante says he was when he composed the *Vita Nuova* (see *Conv.* I. i. 125). Still more, we know that the *Vita Nuova* was dedicated to

¹ 'Rimase tutta la sopradetta cittade quasi vedova, dispogliata di ogni dignitade, ond' io, ancora lagrimando in questa desolata cittade, scrissi a' principi della terra,' &c.

his *primo amico*, i. e. Guido Cavalcanti, who moreover desired that the work should not be in Latin but in the *volgare*¹, and since he died in 1301, it must have been composed before that date, and, in fact, as we have already said (p. 100), it was probably written soon after 1290. Gietmann, however, maintains, and apparently without a particle of evidence, except that derived from the supposed reference to the letter of 1314, and other exigencies of his own 'private interpretation,' that the last fifteen sections of the work, viz. §§ xxix–xlili, are a later addition, not part of the original composition or design, and probably written after 1314; that another seven, viz. §§ xxii–xxviii, may be referred to 1305, while the earlier sections may belong to something like the date assigned to the work by Dante himself. All this elaborate machinery of pure conjecture seems to be required to bolster up the supposed historico-allegorical meaning imagined and maintained by Gietmann. But, to speak of nothing else, the curious indications of 'unity of design' in the carefully thought-out symmetry of the whole work, which Mr. Eliot Norton has pointed out (see Appendix B of his *New Life of Dante*), are strong presumptive evidence against any such piecemeal composition. It is also pertinent to remark that the mention of the dedication of the work to Guido Cavalcanti just quoted occurs not in the earlier part, but in fact in § xxxi, after and in reference to the quotation of this very Epistle to the Cardinals; and we may specially note the present tense, *a cui ciò scrivo*. It is also to be observed that another reference in the present tense to this *primo amico* occurs in § xxv *ad fin.*, which bars the postponement of the composition of the second group of §§ xxii–xxviii to 1305, as desired by Gietmann. Moreover it costs Gietmann a good deal of forced and very inconclusive reasoning to account for the gratuitous distortion, —might we not say, falsification?—of dates involved in the deliberate and emphatic statement that an event took place

¹ Dante gives this as a reason for not quoting any more of the letter in question, which was written in Latin: 'Sarebbe fuori del mio intendimento se io le scrivessi, e simile intenzione so che ebbe questo primo mio amico, *a cui ciò scrivo*, cioè ch' io gli scrivessi solamente in volgare' (§ xxxi, *fin.*).

precisely on a definite day in June, 1290, when the thing really signified did not occur till 1305.

In §§ xxxiii and xxxiv we meet with some more very definite personal allusions, which it is difficult to understand otherwise than literally. In § xxxiii Dante says that he received a visit from his second greatest friend, next after the first who has been already mentioned (viz. in § xxiv), and who was also so closely allied in blood-relationship to Beatrice that there was none nearer to her. Now, her father being dead, this expression would most naturally describe her brother, and indeed this is distinctly stated in § xxxiv¹. This appears to be the only reference made by Dante to this close friendship; but that does not involve any serious difficulty, since very little of his own life and its circumstances is recorded by him outside the limits of the *Vita Nuova*. The friend thus described came to ask him to write somewhat in reference to a lady that was dead, suppressing the mention of her name. Dante, however, understood his meaning, and complied with his request by composing a sonnet; but thinking it unworthy to be presented to one so dear to her, he wrote two stanzas of a *canzone* also, the former portion of which is spoken as by her brother, and the latter as by Dante himself, her servant. Gietmann seems to think that this brother of Beatrice may represent the ecclesiastical hierarchy, or perhaps some prominent member of it. But even so, what is the meaning of the incident? And again, we ask, why may we not understand this and other similar passages literally? If such comparatively small incidents actually occurred, we can understand their being thus recorded; if not, they were surely not worth inventing, for either they have no allegorical significance whatever, or, if they have any such meaning, it is so extremely obscure and far-fetched that it can scarcely be called appropriate. We feel that we might apply here the criticism of Aristotle in the *Poetics* in reference to the occurrence of unimportant or inappropriate incidents in a poem. If they are historical, says Aristotle, that is the poet's excuse; if not,

¹ See note 1 on p. 10, from which it appears that Beatrice Portinari at any rate had five brothers.

and if he had a free hand (as we say), then it is a flaw in his work, ἐξ ἀρχῆς γὰρ οὐ δεῖ συνίστασθαι τοιούτους μύθους¹.

The remainder of the *Vita Nuova* need not detain us further now. We must not overload this already too protracted discussion by entering on the thorny question of the 'gentil donna²,' to whom for a time, and in a sense which is still a matter of great dispute, Dante's affections were transferred after the death of Beatrice. As we should be prepared to expect, the reproaches of Beatrice in *Purg.* xxx and xxxi, &c., and the reference to the *pargoletta* in particular (*Purg.* xxxi. 59), are explained by Gietmann (and, as I believe, quite rightly) as referring altogether to spiritual aberrations, to a life of mere worldliness³ ('presenti cose' or 'cose terrene') or possibly, as some say, a lapse into scepticism, though of this there is certainly no trace in Dante's works as far as I can see. Long as this discussion in one sense has been, one cannot pretend to have given to the elaborate work of Gietmann (two hundred closely printed pages) anything like so complete a discussion or analysis as such a work might justly claim. I must, however, in taking leave of him, protest against the bad taste as

¹ *Poet.* xxiv. § 10.

² See § xxxvi and also the *Convito*. See on this subject the admirable monograph of Mr. G. R. Carpenter on 'the Donna Pietosa.'

³ We must always be careful how we take *au pied de la lettre* the self-accusation of a man who has a high standard. S. Paul speaks of himself as 'the chief of sinners.' The poet Cowper's self-condemnation is another case in point. Such passages are relative both to a man's moral standard, and also to his moral sensitiveness. Dante, like Wordsworth, felt himself to be

'A dedicated spirit,

Else greatly sinning.'

Thus any defection from his high ideal would appear to him to be 'greatly sinning,' and would be condemned in language which would seem to ordinary men to be exaggerated, and which would be almost sure consequently to be misunderstood. Supposing that he became dead and indifferent to the 'impulses of deeper birth'—

'till demanding formal proof
And seeking it in everything, he lost
All feeling of conviction; and in fine
Sick, wearied out with contrarieties,
Yielded up moral questions in despair'

would not this state in the retrospect of a restored and intense faith be fitly described (allowing for the allegory and symbol which was Dante's *natural* language) in such terms as those in *Purg.* xxx and xxxi?

well as against the question-begging process which is involved in his practice of quoting from time to time the most sublime and mystical expressions applied to Beatrice both in the *Vita Nuova* and the *Divina Commedia* as 'inappropriate to Frau Bardi' (for so he habitually refers to her). or, as he says in one passage, 'die achtbare Frau Bardi, geborene Portinari'!

Having now considered at some length the most typical of the 'Symbolist' expositions, we can dismiss the others with a brief notice. The speculations of Gietmann, and even of Rossetti, appear sober reason compared with the wild rhapsodies of Aroux, the very title of whose work prepares us in some degree for its strange contents—'Dante, Hérétique, Révolutionnaire, et Socialiste' (1854). Aroux likewise analyzes the *Vita Nuova* step by step, though we cannot now follow him in this. For him the whole of the *Vita Nuova* is an elaborate and carefully disguised enunciation of the Gnostic and Manichean heresies condemned and anathematized by the Church, while Beatrice is nothing else but Dante's own soul personified. Beatrice is one with himself, and also with Amore, thus forming a mystery or miracle of the Trinity (referring, of course, especially to Dante's language in *Vita Nuova*, § xxx). This miracle, however, is created by Dante himself, who is himself man made in the image of God, and three in one like God, by means of 'intelligence, memory, and will,'¹ and—one feels that one almost owes one's readers an apology for continuing a quotation of which it is hard to say whether the profanity or the absurdity is the more surprising—'Dante is himself the Father, the Son, and the Spirit of Beatrice, in whom he contemplates his own syzygy'! It will scarcely be thought necessary that we should dwell longer on a theory of which this is the summary².

¹ See *Purg.* xxv. 83: 'Memoria, intelligenza e volontà.'

² Another curious work of Aroux may be mentioned here, entitled *Clef de la Comédie Anti-Catholique de Dante Alighieri, Pasteur de l'Eglise Albigeoise dans la ville de Florence affilié à l'Ordre du Temple, donnant l'explication du Langage Symbolique des Fidèles d'Amour*, &c. (Paris, 1856). One or two samples will give an idea of its character.

Beatrice. La pensée-verbe de Dante, sa foi sectaire, son âme et son esprit personnifiés; Eunoia, réunissant sous ce nom-épithète les attributs de la

A very important contributor to the discussion of this question, as of almost every other arising out of the writings of Dante, is Scartazzini. It is very difficult to classify him, because, as in the case of many other controverted points, his views have varied considerably at different times, he being one of the most changeable as well as the most positive of dogmatists, and the opinion to which he has finally settled down combines some of the features of all the classes of theories which we have indicated. He has discussed the subject in *Dante, seine Zeit*, &c.; also in his *Abhandlungen*, &c.; in his *Dantologia*; in several articles in German and Italian periodicals; and finally in his elaborate *Prolegomeni*. In the two earliest of these works he insists very strongly on the historical reality of Beatrice, and, indeed, on her identity with Beatrice Portinari, as being absolutely incontestable, and, moreover, that she was in a literal sense the object of Dante's affection, though also in a perfectly pure and ideal sense¹. He admits (with D'Ancona) the gradual though speedy retirement of the real figure behind the allegorical or symbolical meaning in the *Vita Nuova* itself, while in the *Divina Commedia* the latter has almost extinguished the former. He will not, however, admit that even here Beatrice is 'eine blosse Allegorie.' In the *Seine Zeit*, &c., while asserting the reality of Beatrice quite as emphatically, he adds that he believes the object of Dante's love was directly

Raison, de la Vérité, et de la Liberté. La même, sous les noms divers de Laure, de Lucie, de Fiammetta, &c.

Belzebuth. Le pontife Romain.

Briarée. Philippe le Bel. (So also is Cassius.)

Cacus. Le prince Jean de Naples.

Caiphe. Clément V. (So also Rehoboam and Thais.)

Caron. Très probablement Vieri de' Cerchi.

Christ. L'Empereur.

Circe. L'Église Romaine changeant les hommes en brutes.

Gomorrha. La cour de Rome.

Mahomet. Robert II de Naples.

Pluton (Plutus). Grégoire VII, le redoutable Hildebrand.

&c. &c. &c.

This glossary contains over 370 words!

¹ This language is used and the point argued at some length by Tartarini, *op. cit.* pp. 36 *seqq.*

and primarily an ideal, and only in a secondary sense the maiden of flesh and blood in whom he believed that ideal to be embodied, and only so far as he imagined it to be thus embodied. In the same work he accepts the testimony of Boccaccio as to the main facts and as to the identification of the Beatrice of Dante's writings with Beatrice Portinari, though he rejects the details of their first meeting given by Boccaccio as mere poetic and fanciful amplifications. It is 'eine novellartige Erzählung.' His opinion, however, as to the value of Boccaccio's work has undergone a very serious change, and in several more recent utterances, and notably in the *Prolegomeni* published in 1890, he seems scarcely able to find language strong enough to denounce the worthlessness of Boccaccio as an authority for any fact whatever, regarding him now as an utterly untrustworthy romancer. His final views on the whole subject may be summed up in the two following conclusions:—(1) Whoever or whatever Beatrice was, she became—for Dante at any rate—little else than a pure symbol, a symbol representing the ideal Papacy, leading mankind to the happiness of Heaven, just as Virgil, the symbol of the ideal Empire, leads mankind (in the person of Dante) to the highest earthly happiness, that of the Earthly Paradise. This seems to take little or no account of what is said about Beatrice in the *Vita Nuova*, and to have regard to the *Divina Commedia* only. (2) The Beatrice of Dante, though she was a real person, was certainly *not* Beatrice Portinari, certainly not the wife of Simone de' Bardi. Further, Scartazzini believes 'che la Beatrice di Dante visse e morì nubile, che morì amata e amante del Poeta.' This opinion, which he has maintained in isolated articles before¹, is elaborately defended in his *Prolegomeni* by fifteen arguments. Not, however, to interrupt the order of this discussion, I omit the further consideration of this view for the present, and we must recall Scartazzini later on, so far as he represents this variety of the Realist theory, dealing first, according to the plan proposed, with the Symbolists and Idealists.

¹ E.g. in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 3, 1890; and in the *Corriere* (Syracuse), Mar. 30 and April 16, 1883.

The learned and elaborate work of Perez, *La Beatrice Svelata*, deserves a few words of notice. He regards the keystone of Dante's system to be the Aristotelian and Scholastic doctrine of the distinction of the *Intellectus Possibilis* and the *Intellectus Agens*. That Beatrice represents the *Intellectus Agens*, guiding and illuminating the *Intellectus Possibilis* typified by Dante himself, Perez regards as a matter of mathematical demonstration, if ever there were such demonstration (p. 198); moreover, that the same doctrine is embodied in the Greco-Alexandrine Apocryphal Book of Wisdom (possibly the work of Philo¹), where the *Intellectus Agens* appears in the personification 'Wisdom.' Perez indeed considers this Book (referring especially to chapters viii and ix) to be the actual source and origin of Dante's conception of Beatrice, of his symbolic devotion to her from childhood, and of other details of his purely allegorical narrative (p. 222). Further, Perez advocates spelling the name 'beatrice,' since the initial capital, due to editors and not to MSS., appears to him to beg the question of her personality (p. 80). It will be remembered, however, that in MSS. of a certain period acknowledged proper names have a small initial; in fact, they resemble 'uncial' MSS. in the absence of any distinction of letters, but, conversely, they have only minuscules.

One more writer, however, falling under this class, demands a somewhat fuller treatment before we proceed.

Since the preceding criticism of Gietmann, as the latest and most typical representative of the Symbolist school, was written, it has found a new and most able advocate in the *Quarterly Review* for July 1896, in an article entitled 'Dante's *Vita Nuova*.' The writer follows in the main the principles of Biscioni and Gietmann, but he may be said to have entirely recast the Symbolist theory by the addition of important original features, and his whole case is presented with rare literary skill. He maintains that in composing

¹ Such was the opinion of S. Augustine (*Retract.* ii. 4), S. Jerome, and Isidore *aucl.* Perez, p. 214; but S. Augustine does not seem to say this (l. c.), but only that he did *not* any longer think it to be the work of the Son of Sirach.

the *Vita Nuova* Dante had two distinct, though closely related, purposes¹, as follows:—

First, to depict in an allegorical form the perennial human struggle between Faith and Reason, leading to the appropriate conclusion, that Faith 'working by (or worked on by) Love' remains in possession of the field. In particular the initial and youthful phases of the struggle are delineated, as a prelude to the more detailed picture of the means and manner of the final deliverance effected in maturer life, which is recorded in the *Divina Commedia*.

Secondly, to prepare the way for the *Divina Commedia* from quite another point of view—namely, to create, by the elaborate invention of a series of most realistic details², the artistic illusion that Beatrice, the ideal representative in the *Divina Commedia* of Faith, Revelation, or the Church, was an historical person, as real as Virgil, who was to be, antithetically to her, the type of Human Reason: to create, in short, a kind of *fictitious real* person³ for the purposes of the *Divina Commedia*. No existing character offered itself as suitable for his purpose, and he would not tolerate on artistic grounds the anomaly of introducing among a crowd of historical and real persons, a palpable abstraction, a mere symbolic name, especially in such a signally exalted position. At the same time this is what he has in fact done after all upon this theory, however elaborately he may have succeeded in disguising the anomaly.

Thus the *Vita Nuova* is a carefully planned fiction, with this double conscious purpose from beginning to end, with no necessary relation to any real person or real events whatsoever (though this is not, on the other hand, necessarily excluded⁴), except so far as, when spiritually interpreted,

¹ See *Q. R.* pp. 52, 53, where this double purpose is clearly set forth.

² A similar realistic effect is produced by the artistic device of comparing certain banks in the seventh Circle of the Inferno to the dykes near Bruges and those at Padua, 'Tutto che nè sì alti nè sì grossi,' *Inf.* xv. 3-12; or again the measurements of some of the Bolge in Circle 8, see *Inf.* xxx. 86.

³ In short (if the slippancy of the comparison may be pardoned), a sort of mediaeval 'Mrs. Harris.'

⁴ *Q. R.* p. 41: 'the question whether Beatrice was a real human person whom Dante loved is neither affirmed nor denied.' See also *ib.* p. 53.

it delineates some portions of Dante's own spiritual experience. Yet even this would be only accidental, and would only hold in so far as Dante himself represents humanity¹; in so far as he is a sort of 'Son of Man' in his spiritual experience. But surely is any such passionate religious struggle in early boyhood and youth in any sense 'ideal' or 'typical'? Is it not rather unique, even if conceivable at all? In Dante's own case, it may not be perhaps quite inconceivable, but, if so, it is only because his spiritual, emotional, imaginative faculties were all quite exceptionally intense.

One general and obvious objection must be stated at the outset. How is this unity and completeness of design, this 'consistent plan and continuous development from *Incipit Vita Nuova* down to the last Canto of the *Paradiso*²,' consistent with the early composition of the work when Dante was about 25³? This statement, be it remembered, is made by Dante himself (*Conv.* I. i) and does not depend on the despised authority of Boccaccio. This difficulty has been felt by Gietmann with other 'Symbolists,' and we have seen how he has attempted to deal with it, *supra* p. 100.

Now it cannot be denied that this theory viewed in the abstract is very ingenious and attractive. Further, it is very difficult to attack by direct arguments, in virtue of the double purpose attributed to the author which provides also 'two strings to the bow' of its defenders. Details which might be objected to as unsuitable for one of these purposes could be defended as serviceable for the other. In this way some of the most damaging objections to Gietmann's theory, for instance, may be evaded. The main question is, does this theory, so ingenious in the abstract, afford an adequate explanation of the *facts*; i.e. of the contents and the inspiring spirit of the *Vita Nuova* itself? The answer must depend

¹ *Q. R.* p. 45: 'The Ego is not the Ego of the man Dante Alighieri but of the ideal pilgrim whom Dante personates.'

² *Q. R.* p. 53.

³ 'The sacred poem, *while yet in preparation*, threw off the "*Vita Nuova*" as an offshoot' (*Q. R.* p. 47). Can these words be thought applicable at that time of Dante's life?

largely on the subjective feeling or impression which a careful and sympathetic reading of this exquisite little work leaves on the mind of each reader. Does this theory satisfy him? Does it seem adequate to explain the intensity of feeling, drawn apparently from the real 'depths of a divine despair,' which glows on almost every page? Is it conceivable that all this is consciously 'made to order,' that it is elaborately simulated, or, as this writer himself expresses it, 'pervaded by inanity'? I am quite aware that the answers given to such questions by myself or any other reader of the work have no value or interest to any one else. Further, it would invite the obvious reply—'Are ye also deceived?' 'What stronger testimony could be given to the artistic skill of the author, or to the success that here crowned his efforts, if such be the general impression produced upon his readers¹?' At the same time it must be remembered that none of the theories, Realist, Idealist, Symbolist, are susceptible of direct proof or disproof. 'Probability must be the guide of life' in such cases, and it is therefore legitimate to attach some weight to the answer to the question. Does any proposed theory impress the attentive reader of the *Vita Nuova* as adequately (or at least more adequately than the others) explaining the genesis and existence of the work for which it professes to account²?

I may, however, notice before proceeding at least one tangible direct argument which appears to me to have considerable weight. I mean the very numerous and also very prominent incidents in this allegorical narrative of which no explanation is offered by this theory. I am quite aware that to expect such an explanation on anything like a complete

¹ In effect, the writer of this article himself says as much. 'His immediate aim was to give Beatrice a solid terrestrial character, and in this he has succeeded (perhaps) beyond his wish.' . . . 'This outer surface fulfils (and exceeds) the author's immediate aim' (*Q. R.* p. 48). Certainly if this theory is credible, Macaulay's statement that 'Bunyan was the only writer who ever gave to the abstract the interest of the concrete' becomes quite out of date.

² The elaborate theories as to what is called 'the Synoptic Problem' must similarly submit themselves to this same test, and so in the case of many other literary problems that might be suggested, e.g. the origin of the Homeric poems, &c.

scale in any allegory is (as the writer observes) an 'elementary misapprehension.' I do not forget the warning of S. Augustine on this head, or his admirable illustration, that 'all parts of the plough are necessary, though it is only the share that cleaves the ground.' Yet there must be some reasonable limit to the proportion between significant and *un*-significant details in any well-constructed allegory. The author of this article paraphrases the allegory of the *Vita Nuova* as it presents itself to his mind with singular ability and skill in pp. 41-44. But (1) he leaves a most disproportionate amount of realistic details unnoticed, and (2) many of these details have all the appearance of being conspicuous and important. Some at least are so elaborated and emphasized that one seems reduced to the alternatives, *either* that they really happened, *or* that they must have been invented by the author for a definite object, beyond the general purpose of imposing upon his readers by a fictitious realism.

Among these I would specially mention (omitting many others that might be added):—

(a) The death of the young friend of Beatrice, and Dante's sympathetic sorrow (§ 8).

(b) The annoyance caused to the second lady *della difesa* by Dante's (simulated) attentions (§ 12).

(c) The strange incident of the 'gabbo' of Beatrice and her companions, and the crisis or turning-point in Dante's life to which it led, and perhaps we may add the part played by the friend who introduced him to this company and conducted him away (§ 14).

(d) The death of Beatrice's father; her poignant grief, and that of her sorrowing companions and of Dante himself (§ 22).

(e) The presentiment that Beatrice herself must die¹, borne in upon Dante by his own dangerous illness following shortly upon the death of Beatrice's father (§ 23). Also the

¹ Too much stress seems to me to be laid by the author on 'the translation of Beatrice' (p. 51); 'not her natural death but her translation' (p. 52). But in § 23 and elsewhere, as also in some of the Sonnets, the aspect of natural death is often present. But how often even now is the natural death of those we love transformed by affection into a 'translation' to heaven, and spoken of as such.

kind tending which he received from the 'donna giovane e gentile . . . la quale era meco di propinquissima sanguinità congiunta' (*ib.*).

(*f*) The pointed introduction of the former 'lady' of his chief friend (Guido Cavalcanti) in company with Beatrice (§ 24).

(*g*) Above all, the absolutely precise date, year, month, and day, assigned to the death of Beatrice, accompanied by the consideration that it was one *quite unsuited* for Dante's allegorical purpose of tracing the mystical number nine as manifested therein (§ 30). It leaves the distinct impression that he was hampered in this date by hard facts (see on this further, *infra*, p. 123).

(*h*) The letter addressed 'ai principi della terra' (§ 31).

(*i*) The incident of Beatrice's brother, as the friend to whom, after Guido Cavalcanti, he was most devoted (§§ 33, 34).

(*j*) The visit of the pilgrims to the city in which Beatrice had dwelt (§ 41).

These incidents doubtless vary considerably in importance, but their cumulative effect appears to me to have considerable weight against a theory which dismisses them as outside the main stream of the allegory. It is surely not enough to say that they are purely invented and arbitrary details, inserted (if I may so say) to hoodwink the reader, 'to throw dust in his eyes,' and weave around him more closely the web of illusion as to the historical reality of the fiction Beatrice. But as to the weight of this consideration, again one must admit a large subjective element. Each reader must judge for himself. 'Ἐν τῇ αἰσθήσει ἡ κρίσις.' Some may perhaps think a sufficient apology to be made for it by the admission of the writer himself that he proposes to translate the allegory 'not line by line and sentence by sentence, but with a free hand' . . . 'still leaving fields for diligent readers to explore.' Certainly the 'diligent reader,' who is thus dismissed with the familiar 'Alia per te vide' of the old Commentators on Dante, will have his hands very full with the work of further exploration to which he is invited. I cannot however feel that this

apology for omitting to offer any sort of explanation for such a large mass of conspicuous incidents is at all adequate, nor do I see what possible allegorical interpretation can on this theory be suggested for most of them. I fully admit a very large admixture of allegory and idealization to be infused into the historic narrative of the *Vita Nuova*¹, but I could never believe (and for this more reasons will be adduced presently) that the book is 'essentially an allegory,' or that the question of its having an historical basis is wholly secondary and unimportant. Quite as soon could I believe *In Memoriam* to be a poetical exercise on an imaginary name, as, no doubt, before it is as old as the work of Dante, will one day be confidently asserted.

I will conclude this part of the discussion with the following extracts from Dr. Carpenter², which seem to me to give a far more satisfactory and natural account of the development of the *Vita Nuova* out of an historical basis of fact, than the converse process suggested by the very able writer whom I have ventured to criticize. 'The *Vita Nuova* is far more a work of art than one may at first be inclined to imagine³. It is true that it has the form of an autobiography, but to the poet writing in the "heat and height of emotion" his past life does not seem a mere succession of facts: to him it is a series of living pictures. embodiments of emotions in incidents, the progression of events in an ideal way to an ideal end. That is the way in which a poet conceives of his life, and in telling the story of it, he would emphasize to an appropriate value certain significant incidents; others, insignificant or misleading, he would turn, so as to point them along the line of ideal development which he had chosen . . . In his mind facts would

¹ In *Conv.* II. xiii. 26-29, we read: 'per lo quale ingegno molte cose, quasi come sognando, già vedefa; siccome nella *Vita Nuova* si può vedere.'

² *Donna Pictosa*, p. 41.

³ Witness the very remarkable discovery of the elaborate symmetry of its design by Professor Eliot Norton, *The New Life*, &c., Appendix B. We may even go so far as the *Q. R.* p. 46 and admit that it is 'really a work of calculated ingenuity and studied artifice' without being in the least degree shaken in our belief in its having an historical foundation. It should be added that the elaborate symmetrical construction of the *Vita Nuova* is quite in Dante's manner, as I have endeavoured to show in a later Essay in respect of the *Purgatorio*.

acquire a certain perfection which they scarcely had in real life, and form and colour and light and shade would all work at the artist's will.' Again (p. 46): 'In Dante's time . . . in the minds of the wise and foolish alike there existed a feeling that, particularly in the realm of art, all things had, or should have, an allegorical meaning when looked at with the eye of the understanding. It was in this way that the Bible and the Aeneid were read; and it was in this way that Dante intended the *Commedia* [and, we may certainly add, the *Vita Nuova*] to be read.' Poletto again explains the genesis of the *Vita Nuova* very similarly thus: 'Nella *Vita Nuova* tutto è storia, tutto realtà; e sulla realtà Dante poggia i suoi simboli come l'edifizio sul fondamento' (*Alcuni Studi*, p. 3). See further D'Ancona, *Discorso*, &c., p. xxxv. The complex character of the *Vita Nuova* is thus happily described by Délecluze: 'Ces mémoires, ce roman—car la *Vie Nouvelle* tient par quelque chose à ces deux sortes d'ouvrages—la *Vie Nouvelle* de Dante, enfin, est écrite sous trois formes qui se développent simultanément: le récit détaillé en prose, le même récit condensé en vers, puis enfin expliqué dans un commentaire . . . Ce livre est donc tout à la fois narratif, poétique, et philosophique' (*Préface*, p. 1).

We pass on next in order to another class of writers, viz. those who maintain the Ideal theory, i.e. that in Beatrice we have not a 'symbol,' but an 'ideal,' in fact the idealization of womanhood, which Dante thus personifies, and, if we may so say, incarnates. The principal exponents of this theory are Professor Bartoli and Professor Renier, the former in *Della Vita di Dante Alighieri* and the latter in *La Vita Nuova e la Fiammetta*, and in articles in the *Giornale Storico* and elsewhere. The principal arguments on which these writers rely will be now explained, without adopting the exact arrangement or language of either of them, so that by thus fusing them together needless repetition may be avoided.

(1) It is argued that the worship of woman, or womanhood, was the characteristic feature of the whole contemporary, and for a century and more antecedent, school or cycle of poetry in Provence, Sicily, Bologna, and still more in that of

the 'stil nuovo' with which Dante associates himself in *Purg.* xxiv. 57. It is further alleged that this worship was always veiled in the profession of love for some woman, ostensibly a person, but more truly a personification, towards whom the love of the poet was purely fictitious, and that his whole poetry, in its outward aspect amatory, was really dialectic and philosophical. Among other indications of the unreality of these expressions of love, it is urged that in no case does the 'donna' of their poetry correspond with the wife of the poet, either before or after marriage, even when there is no suspicion of conjugal infidelity or estrangement. Thus Cino da Pistoia, who sings the praises of Selvaggia Vergiolesi, was himself married and had five children; and Guido Cavalcanti extols Giovanna in his poetry, though he was married (as we all know) to the daughter of Farinata degli Uberti¹. Dante himself had at least four,

¹ We may add the Lagia of Lapo Gianni, Dante's friend (see Rossetti, *Dante and his Circle*, pp. 143, 145, 147; and the Becchina of Cecco Angiolieri (*ib.* pp. 206-214), who was certainly married to another, since her poetic admirer addresses two sonnets to her husband! (*ib.* pp. 222-3). Another case is that of Francesco da Barberino (1264-1348, in which latter year he died of the great plague in Florence), the author of *Dal Reggimento e dei Costumi delle Donne*, and the *Documenti d'Amore*. Dr. Carpenter, *op. cit.* p. 37, says: 'He too in his youth sent out verses to the great writers of his day, just as Dante did; he too had his *donna*, who was always human in form but in essence divine.' She symbolized 'Sapienza,' or 'Intelligenza.' In a Ballata (*Documenti*, &c., p. 371) he speaks of his Costanza, whom he had known in life on the earth, just as Dante does of Beatrice. When she arrived in Paradise, 'Dio festa ne tenne.' The Angels could not bear to look upon her glory:—

'Che nul di noi (*vis.* Angeli) è forte a sofferire
(Sia quanto vuol beato)
Guardar ne' raggi di che ell' è vestita.
Vedesti in terra lei la più compita,' &c.

This shows the futility of deriving any argument against the reality of Beatrice from the exalted language applied to her by Dante. Also how necessary it is for rightly understanding Dante 'that we should take account of the language and habits of thought of his contemporaries,' or (as Mazzini says) that we should 'endeavour to penetrate as deeply and earnestly as possible into the medium, the element, in which Dante lived.' Barberino, it should be added, was also married (not to Costanza) and had five children. Finally, the 'Angiola' of Fazio degli Uberti appears to have been a Malaspina and a married woman, and one with whom he had no personal intercourse or even correspondence. See Renier, *Liriche*, &c., Introd. p. clxxxvi.

some say seven, children by his wife Gemma Donati¹; and, whatever may have been their relations together, there is not a particle of evidence for the unfavourable gossip of some of the so-called biographers. Thus an ideal 'donna' was a sort of necessary part of a poet's equipment, and Dante must needs therefore furnish himself with a name-bearing ideal like his brethren. So it is argued.

Now there is an element of truth in all this. There is no doubt that the term Love, among other senses, bore a meaning for 'the Christians of the thirteenth century' which has passed out of later experience. Doubtless then, as now, the term love was applied both to matrimonial affection on the one hand, and to animal passion on the other. But there was also another sentiment distinct from either of these, and able to co-exist perhaps with both, but certainly with the former, viz. the chivalrous devotion to a woman, neither wife nor mistress, by means of which the spirit of man, were he knight or poet, was rendered capable of self-devotion and noble deeds², and of rising to a higher ideal of life³. How

¹ On this question see note in *Dante and his Early Biographers*, p. 177.

² Dante himself draws the contrast very concisely in *Sonetto xxx (fin.)* :—

'Che amar si può bellezza per diletto,
E amar puossi virtù per alto oprare.'

And in *V. N.* § xi we have a beautiful description of the purifying and elevating effect of the influence of Beatrice upon Dante himself. See also *Canzone II.* 55-72. Petrarch often bears witness to a similar experience. Compare further Barberino's *Documenti d' Amore*, p. 17 :—

'Ch' Amor vuol che li servi suoi son tali
Che non pur sol da mali
Si guardin, ch' enno detti, e son peccato;
Ma vuol veder ornato
Ciascun de' suoi di costumi e di senno.'

³ See Symonds' *Study of Dante*, pp. 243, 245. Also *Renaissance in Italy*, vol. iv. p. 59: 'In the Italo-Provençal literature . . . Woman was regarded as an ideal being, to be approached with worship bordering on adoration. The lover derived personal force, virtue, elevation, energy, from his enthusiastic passion.' (See further, pp. 90-96.) Now no poet, however original, can be understood apart from his poetic heritage, out of connexion with the ideas and habits of those

'Ch' a poetar gli davano intelletto';

and Dante makes in several places copious acknowledgement of his debt to the poetic cycle of which the most distinguishing feature might almost be described as the apotheosis of Woman. It would be very interesting and

utterly distinct this sentiment was from those which we connect with the same term may be judged from the fact that some of the highest authorities of the 'Courts of Love' pronounced it to be incompatible with the marriage relation, though it did not exclude marriage, *except between the 'lovers' themselves*. As Del Lungo remarks, 'La donna del Sonetto e della ballattella rimaneva fuori della casa e della famiglia' (*op. cit.* p. 7).

We must not, however, be tempted to embark on a subject demanding a treatise in itself. But it is necessary to maintain that this sentiment was not the less a real emotion, not the less truly felt because it is now perhaps obsolete, if indeed it is so. It is a sentiment which, in the beautiful language of Wordsworth,

'teaches less to love than to adore,
If that be not indeed the highest love.'

At any rate, it is as much a *fact*, that must be taken account of in the interpretation of the writings of that age, as the habit of allegorizing the events of history or of daily life.

instructive, if it did not carry us too far from our present purpose, to trace how this dominant idea was modified in a rapidly descending scale in the Laura of Petrarch, where the real has made very large encroachments on the ideal, and the Fiammetta of Boccaccio, where the ideal, though not discarded, has come to be in complete subordination to the real, and no very high type of 'real' either. Nay, we might carry the comparison a step further, and trace this degradation to a still lower depth, when a new ideal (if we may so call it) of Woman arose out of the coarse realistic representations of Boccaccio and his successors and imitators among the *Novellatori*, an ideal resulting in a process converse to that of deification or apotheosis, for which I do not know that an appropriate name exists. The result of this is a literature of virulent misogynistic vituperation, specially common in the *Novelle* of the *Quattrocentisti* (see Symonds, *Renaissance*, iv. p. 212), in which it is a sort of commonplace. It began however to arise much earlier. It is of course common enough in Boccaccio, especially in his later days, when he posed as more or less of a reformed character (e. g. in the Commentary on the *Inferno*, and in the *Vita Dantis*), and it is by no means absent in Petrarch (e. g. in many passages of the *De Remediis utriusque fortunae*). Mr. Symonds suggests that it was to some extent also 'a scholastic survival of the coarse literature of the mediaeval clergy.' Much interesting and suggestive information on the whole of this subject will be found in the fourth volume of Mr. Symonds' *Renaissance in Italy*, already referred to. There is also a bibliographical note which may be found useful in Mr. Mott's Essay on *The System of Courtly Love*, Boston, 1896.

If we choose to ignore this, and, starting from the modern experience and modern associations of a term, insist upon judging from this standpoint what was written under entirely different circumstances and mental surroundings, the whole of our criticism is vitiated at its very root. We may go further, and say that, apart from the characteristic differences of different centuries, Dante is himself in some respects *sui generis*. Dr. Döllinger, however, perhaps states this too strongly when he says: 'Dante's relation to Beatrice, to this combination of the earthly and the heavenly, of abstract symbolism with the most living personality, is something quite unique, unexperienced in any other human life¹.' We might almost describe it as an effort to anticipate that ideal state where 'they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.'

I do not wish to be understood as admitting, much less as maintaining, that Dante never had any but this mysterious feeling for Beatrice. Indeed I doubt not that there was first the literal and childish enthusiasm of the keenly sensitive and highly imaginative boy, which gradually ripened, or changed—especially as the literal attainment of the object of his early affection so soon became impossible—into the more sober and mature and (according at least to our conceptions) the more artificial feeling for the Beatrice of his poetic imagination. But it was the same Beatrice throughout, although the poet was doubtless himself unconscious how very much his own mind had contributed to the final picture. Thus with Dante 'the child was father of the man,' and in a degree beyond most other men his earlier and his later days were 'bound each to each by natural piety.'

(2) So much as to the argument that this professed *feeling* itself was artificial and unreal. We equally repudiate the other limb or branch of the argument, viz. that the *object* of the professed feeling was, or might be, no less unreal. Not only to these old poets was the worship of an ideal womanhood an elevating and ever present influence, but, further, that ideal was as constantly and as necessarily asso-

¹ *Studies in European History*, p. 92.

ciated with some definite individual as the Jewish notions of deity were with some concrete idol. And, to carry on the illustration, we may observe that, in any stage higher than mere fetichism, the idol or image is a help to the mind of the worshipper, not the final object of his adoration. The reality of the ladies celebrated by many of these poets has been already sufficiently illustrated by actual examples. (See *sup.* p. 117.) But, *per contra*, Professor Renier argues that as in the *Convito* Dante expressly says that the eyes and the smile of the ideal lady of his mind represent the demonstrations and the persuasions (or the 'sweet reasonableness') of Philosophy, so we must apply the same interpretation to the language of the *Vita Nuova*. Possibly so; but this does not prove that they have not a real and literal sense *besides*, any more than the association of the sun, moon, and planets with the several sciences in the *Convito* requires us to maintain that they have no proper place in astronomy also.

(3) It is argued, if the *Vita Nuova* is in any sense a history, why is it made up of a series of dreams and visions, most of which certainly cannot be understood as literal facts? To this we reply, that Dante undoubtedly idealized the bare facts to a very considerable degree. He was not writing a chronicle or a matter-of-fact history, but a poem in prose. But we may still maintain that all the coruscations of his fancy sparkle forth from a core of solid fact.

(4) As an argument of a similar kind, the prominence and frequent recurrence of the number nine¹ in all the alleged events of Beatrice's life, especially in view of the mystical importance attached to the phenomenon by Dante, are said

¹ We might add, as another characteristic instance of the importance attached by Dante to numbers, the recurrence in his works of the number thirty-three. It is the number of Cantos in each of the three parts of the *Divina Commedia* if *Inf.* i be regarded (as it fairly may be) as the Introductory Canto to the *whole* Poem (see *Inf.* ii. 1-9). Also thirty-three is the number of the poetical compositions of the *Vita Nuova*, and also that of the sections or chapters in the *Epistle to Can Grande*, which may perhaps be taken into some account in the question as to its genuineness. Also note, as regards *nine* again, the curious speculation in *Conv.* IV. xxiv. 63-68, that if Christ had died a natural death it would have been at the age of eighty-one!

to be another proof of the fabulous character of the whole story. Here, again, we are quite prepared to admit that Dante has perhaps not been 'ἀκριβὴς ὥσπερ λογογράφος.' At the same time there are, no doubt, plenty of such curious coincidences in actual life to be traced out by the ingenuity of one who is on the look-out for them, and who is also prepared to disregard exceptions and points of difference, and to record only points of agreement with his theory. That such curious coincidences do occur in real life is a simple fact of experience. And it is plainly what Bacon would call an 'idolon tribus,' and a palpable logical fallacy, to argue hence as to the unreality of the whole of an alleged history connected with them, or, short of thus openly arguing, even necessarily to allow oneself to feel in an atmosphere of general suspicion and uncertainty respecting it. If the story of the Papal aggression in 1850 had only appeared in the Old Testament, it would have been discredited long ago; since no intelligent modern critic would allow us to accept as sober history a narrative which informed us that this great and startling religious movement was originated by Pius and carried into effect by Wiseman, while the leaders of the contemporary innovating parties in the Church, in the two opposite directions of Ecclesiasticism and Rationalism, were both called Newman; and further, that they were significantly, though no less incredibly, described as actual brothers¹. We all need to be reminded sometimes of the true paradox of Agathon, 'It is likely that many things should happen that are unlikely.'

But the case before us also affords a good illustration of the unsubstantial character of some of these coincidences.

¹ This illustration is borrowed in the main from *The Eclipse of Faith* (p. 340, &c.), where the ingenious speculation is attributed to Dr. Dickkopf, or Dr. Scharfsinn, the writer is not quite sure which it should be, though, as he drily remarks, either name would do equally well. Bishop Lightfoot in his *Essays on Supernatural Religion* (p. 24) gives an instance from 'real life' which assures us that these distinguished 'Filologs' are still active, or are not left without worthy representatives. A recent German critic has suggested that Euodias and Syntyche in Phil. iv. 2 are not persons, but representative names and describing rival parties in the Church; "Rightway" and "Consort" denoting the orthodoxy of the one, and the incorporation of the other'!

Let us look behind the scenes for a moment, and see Dante at work elaborating (I would almost venture to say 'cooking') one of his principal 'coincidences,' and we shall find that it has cost him no little trouble to bring out the desired result. In § xxx *init.* we read as follows:—'I say that according to the use of Arabia [*al. Italia*] her most noble soul departed at the first hour of the *ninth* day of the month; and according to the use of Syria it departed in the *ninth* month of the year . . . ; and according to *our* use,' &c. Now there can be no doubt that the right reading is *Arabia*, not *Italia*. For (1) *Arabia* is the reading of the best MSS. (2) There is no antithesis between 'secondo l' usanza d' *Italia*' and 'secondo l' usanza *nostra*,' five lines below. (3) We might add that *Italia* looks like a correction, since, if Dante wrote *Arabia*, *Italia* might be substituted by one who could see no reason for going so far afield, but the converse supposition is scarcely conceivable. The following explanation, which I communicated to the *Academy*, December 1, 1894, appears to me to make all clear. It is admittedly Dante's object to find the number *nine*¹ pervading the date of Beatrice's death in respect of the *day*, the *month*, and the *year*. The *year* presents no difficulty 'secondo l' usanza nostra,' since 1290 is the year in which the perfect number (ten) was nine times completed in that century (*l. c.*, l. 10). As to the *month*, he has recourse to the Calendar of Syria, in which, the first month 'Tisrin' corresponding to October, June would be the *ninth* month. Now this information Dante doubtless obtained from Alfraganus, *Elementa Astronomica*, ch. i, where it is stated that 'Tixryn' is the first month of the Syrian year, and also that it corresponds with October². Finally, that the *day* of Beatrice's death should be the *ninth* day, he has to appeal to another Calendar, that of Arabia. Now turning to the same chapter of Alfraganus, in the paragraph immediately preceding the last quoted we read

¹ Cf. § iii. 17, 64; vi. 16; xii. 75; xxiii. 8, for other references to the number nine.

² There is no possible doubt that Dante was habitually indebted to Alfraganus for his astronomical facts, especially in the *Convito*, where more than once he definitely acknowledges his obligation to him.

'Auspiciantur enim Arabes diem quemque cum sua nocte, id est civilem, *ab eo momento quo sol occidit* . . . sed apud Romanos, &c. dies nocti praemittitur, et dies quisque civilis incipit *ab exortu solis*.' Here is clearly the key to Dante's reference to 'the use of Arabia,' and we perceive (what I believe has not been suspected before) that Beatrice really died on the evening of June 8, and not, as commonly supposed, on June 9, and that in order that Dante might still be able to call it June 9 he was obliged to have recourse to the Arabian system in which 'the evening and the morning' make up each day, and June 9 '*secondo l'usanza nostra*' began at sunset on June 8. Thus Dante has to appeal to three different Calendars in order to secure the mystical number nine in the unpromising date June 8, 1290, Arabian for the day, Syrian for the month, Italian for the year.

Surely it must occur to every one that we have in this a very strong argument for the reality of Beatrice, and the historical character of the narrative of her death. Unless that actually occurred on June 8, and Dante was thus hampered by a real fact, why should he have chosen such an awkward date, involving all this gratuitous labour to make it appear consistent with his preconceived theory? If Beatrice were a fiction of his imagination, why should he not have put her to death on November 9, and saved all further trouble¹? I cannot myself imagine any escape from the force of this argument.

(5) Again, the silence of Dante as to the family name of Beatrice, as to the name of the city where she lived, and as to other definite details that might have been looked for in the case of a real person, has been urged in proof that she is only an ideal. To this it is added, as a supplementary

¹ The reference to the Arabian Calendar is differently explained by Del Lungo in his work *Beatrice nella vita*, &c. p. 26. He maintains that June 9 of Arabian notation would correspond with June 19 of Italian usage, and he thinks therefore that the death of Beatrice took place on June 19. But it seems to me (1) that this explanation is much less simple and obvious than mine; (2) where would Dante have possibly obtained the information of any such correspondence of dates? (3) the obvious combination of the perfect numbers ten and nine again in the number nineteen would have afforded him a much easier way out of the difficulty.

that the language in which she is often described (*Inf.* ii. 76-78, 103, and very frequently in the together exaggerated if applied to any mortal is suitable only to an abstract ideal of womanly

the first of these arguments, we reply that *if* the were as handed down by Boccaccio, Dante and long both married to others, there is quite sufficient Dante's reticence, both on artistic and on personal And as to the latter argument—not to dwell on other cases as Dante's own language in the *Convito* idealized yet historical Cato, or Petrarch's language *Laura*², or that of Guittone, Guido Cavalcanti, and other literary poets³, or, again, that of Cino da Pistoia⁴—we admit that in such passages the ideal, so to speak, swallows up the real, just as in those passages which describe, not to describe, facts and events, the real swallows up the ideal. The former is neatly described thus by Centofanti, *verità della storia si cangia in verità poetica*; and 'Poetry is truer than fact,' as Lord Tennyson was fond of saying. We do not for a moment deny or seek to depreciate the value of the ideal theory about Beatrice; only we say that it is not the whole truth. Beatrice was certainly the ideal of womanhood for Dante, but not *therefore* the less a real person; Dante's devotion, adoration, love—whatever we please to call it—was always much more for the ideal Beatrice, whom 'he had made for himself to worship,' than for the actual Beatrice, daughter of Folco Portinari; and this, doubtless, far more than he was himself at all aware⁵.

We may also observe that no other poets of that age under similar circumstances mention more than the Christian names. As Del Lungo says, 'i cognomi sono materia ribelle al linguaggio poetico.' Further than this, Tenier declares, 'È assai raro che nei poeti di questo tempo si trova il nome dell'amata donna, scritto là alla buona, senza figure, e senza reticenza.' (He says this without any reference to Dante.) *Liriche, &c.* Introd. p. cxxxii.

² On the relations between Petrarch and Laura see further, *infra*, p. 135.

³ See several passages quoted in Fraticelli, *Dissertazione, &c.*, p. 17.

⁴ E.g. *ad. cit.* Sonnet cxiii.

⁵ As Mr. Lowell frankly declares:—'We have admitted that Beatrice

But is this an experience entirely unknown even in this matter-of-fact age¹, this 'age (as Lowell says) that lectures, not creates²'?

(6) Finally, there is a serious difficulty arising out of the fourteenth and fifteenth sections of the *Vita Nuova*, a serious difficulty on any theory about Beatrice, and one which we did not deal with in analyzing the *Vita Nuova* in connexion with Gietmann's *symbolical* theory, because it is more prominently brought forward by Bartoli as a very strong point in favour of his *ideal* theory. I am referring to the very difficult subject of what is termed 'il gabbo di Beatrice,' the jeering or mocking of Dante by Beatrice at the wedding feast. It has been represented by Bartoli as an insuperable objection to the literal interpretation, since it would represent Beatrice as acting in an unfeeling and even offensive manner. He concludes a somewhat lengthy discussion—'Bisogna cercare la spiegazione di quel mistero; ma la spiegazione non si trova se non negando la storicità del racconto.' One would like a little more 'spiegazione' than this mere negation. In particular one would desire to be informed how the difficulty is diminished by supposing this unlikely incident to have been arbitrarily invented, and how, if such conduct is unseemly in the historical Beatrice, it is to be explained in reference to

Portinari was a living creature . . . but *how* real she was, and whether as real to the poet's memory as to his imagination, may fairly be questioned' (*Essay on Dante*, p. 75).

¹ In his note on *Inf.* ii. 76 Dean Plumptre remarks: 'The ideal transfiguration of Beatrice, which we find throughout the *Commedia*, finds suggestive parallels in Auguste Comte's reverence of Clothilde de Vaux as the perfect type of the Humanity which was the only object of his worship.' See further what is said *infra*, pp. 136, 137. This blending of the real with the ideal is beautifully expressed in Rossetti's *House of Life*, Sonnet v:—

'Lady, I fain would tell how evermore
Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor
Thee from myself, neither our love from God.'

(I owe the quotation to Mr. Gardner, *op. cit.*)

² Or again, in the same striking poem (*The Cathedral*) more at length:—

'This age that blots out life with question-marks,
This nineteenth century with its knife and glass
That make thought physical, and thrust far off
The Heaven, so neighbourly with man of old,
To voids sparse-sown with alienated stars.'

the ideal of womanhood of whom (according to Bartoli) she is the type. Moreover Bartoli's argument depends for much of its force on the absurd supposition, made by himself, that Beatrice, who now jeered at Dante, had at one time encouraged and even returned his affection¹! 'E la Beatrice di Dante pare infatti che ceda all' amore del suo poeta; la giovinetta bellissima *lo guarda e lo saluta*. La passione *dunque* (!!) è sentita anche da lei.' Was ever a conclusion based on such preposterously slender grounds? *Lo guarda e lo saluta*; . . . *dunque*, &c. Why should the passing salute of Beatrice have been of this very compromising character? Why should it have had a significance almost as full of meaning as the nod of Lord Burleigh in *The Critic*? It must be confessed that the *gabbo* is a difficulty, but it would be very greatly diminished if we suppose (and it is surely both possible and probable to suppose) that *Beatrice was herself quite unaware of Dante's devotion to her*. One thing is quite certain: on his own showing, 'he never told his love.' On the contrary, he took every means to conceal it, and to put people on the wrong scent, passing even the bounds of courtesy (as we have seen) with this object². Let us remember that he first saw her at the age of nine, and that after nine years more had passed, and so when he was eighteen, she passed him in the street in the company of two ladies older than herself and saluted him in passing, and this, he says, was the very first time that any words from her had reached his ears³. The next thing mentioned after this is the incident of the 'lady of the screen,' which resulted in such evil rumours as to Dante's conduct that the next time Beatrice met him she refused to notice him⁴. And, lest any one should suppose that this was mere jealousy on her part, Dante expressly states (§ x) that it was because his character was under a cloud. 'For this reason' (he says), 'that is, because of this prevailing rumour which seemed to misfame me of vice (as Rossetti translates the words, *che*

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 65.

² *V. N.* § iii *init.* and l. 18.

³ *V. N.* § x.

⁴ *Ib.* § v-x.

parea che m' infamasse viziosamente), this most gracious one, who was the destroyer of all vices and queen of the virtues . . . denied me her most sweet salutation.' A mysterious vision follows in which *Amore* appears to Dante, and is made to tell him that, though his love must needs be known to her by this time [observe this is only a vision, and represents in point of fact nothing but the communings of Dante's own thoughts], yet he should expound the truth in a song, but still in such a manner as to speak *under the disguise of another*, and not to address Beatrice directly himself, 'chè non è degno¹.' It is just after this that the incident of the marriage scene (in § xiv) occurs, when, according to his own showing, Dante's conduct must have been most strange and unaccountable, not to say ridiculous, to those who did not know his secret; and then it was that Beatrice joined the other ladies in laughing at him. This *gabbo* may not, indeed, have been 'ideal' conduct on Beatrice's part; in fact, we maintain that it was certainly not this; but the difficulty involved is very much diminished if we suppose that owing to Dante's continued and studious concealment of his love, together with the extreme rareness of the occasions on which he and Beatrice had ever met—at any rate they had never spoken since their first meeting at the ages of nine and eight—the result, and indeed the natural result, had been that Beatrice herself was either wholly unaware of Dante's devotion to her, or, if she were in any degree aware of it, she may have regarded it as a mere boyish fancy without depth or seriousness. If she were thus ignorant, her conduct to him at the wedding ceases to wear that unfeeling and even heartless character to which so much exception has been taken. It may have been inconsiderate, unsympathetic, somewhat thoughtless; but, after all, is this inconceivable in a girl of nineteen or twenty on the occasion of a marriage, and perhaps her own marriage, feast? Such a flaw would rather seem to be an indication of the reality of the narrative in which it occurs, on much the same principle as the well-known *diffi-*

¹ 'Queste parole fa che sieno quasi uno mezzo, sì che tu non parli a lei immediatamente, chè non è degno' (§ xii).

cilior lectio in criticism¹. As D'Ancona says, 'Qui la storia nemica spesso alla poesia [questo] ci narra.'

But it is now time to turn to the positive arguments by which the theory of the Realists, in the sense and degree in which that term has already been explained, is supported.

First, we note with satisfaction that among the adherents of this theory are still included most of the best-known names in Dante literature, some having strenuously defended it, others assuming it as a sort of fundamental axiom wholly beyond dispute. One of its earliest champions was the well-known Dionisi, the speculations of Biscioni having then first rendered a formal defence necessary. Among more recent names I may mention—Giuliani, who goes so far (undoubtedly too far) as to deny any ideal or allegorical meaning in the *Vita Nuova*—'there is nothing (he says) which goes beyond simple and literal history'²; Fraticelli, who has embarked on the controversy at great length in the preface to his edition of the *Vita Nuova*; Lubin, in his elaborate *Studi* for the *Divina Commedia*; Carducci, in his Monograph on '*Le Rime di Dante*' published in *Dante e suo Secolo*; Puccianti, in his essay on *L'Allegoria di Beatrice* in the same collection³;

¹ It is amusing to contrast the following very characteristic French view of Beatrice with the varied forms of German and Italian scepticism which the symbolical and ideal theories have brought before us: 'Malgré son jeune âge, sa figure avait une expression sereine de candeur, une grâce naïve et sérieuse à la fois, quelque chose de grave et de l'idéal dans la forme de l'ovale, qui expliquent, si c'est possible, l'émotion soudaine de Dante!' (Drouilhet, quoted by Renier, p. 154.) Even this is outdone by the following: 'Elle avait la physionomie aimable et pure, les yeux bleus de ciel et très vifs, les cheveux dorés et frisés'!! (R. P. Berthier, *Beatrice Portinari*, p. 9.)

² Quoted by Renier in *Giornale Storico*, ii. p. 389. See also p. 367.

³ To these we may add Mazzini, who writes thus ('*Minor Works of Dante*, p. 195): 'How, from the mystic style of the *Vita Nuova*, and from some ambiguous expressions put there as a prelude to the poem, learned men have been able to bring themselves—in spite of the most positive evidence to the contrary—to doubt the existence of "Bice," or to admit two distinct beings, the Beatrice of the poet and the Beatrice of the theologian—thus destroying that progressive continuity which is the peculiar characteristic of the genius and the love of Dante—I cannot imagine.'

One of the latest contributors to the study of Dante, Mr. E. Gardner, in his admirable work, *Dante's Ten Heavens*, expresses himself with equal confidence in the same sense: 'When the spiritual guide has done her work . . . all allegory practically ceases, and the real woman is enthroned in the glory

D'Ancona, in his edition of the *Vita Nuova*; Délécluze, in *La Vie Nouvelle*; and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in his introduction to *Dante and his Circle*, p. 1, where he describes the *Vita Nuova* as the 'Autobiography or Autopsychology of Dante's youth till about his twenty-seventh year.' Among well-known English writers I will only mention Mr. Lowell, Mr. Symonds, Sir Theodore Martin, and Mr. Eliot Norton, the last-named dismissing the subject in a parenthesis—'for I regard as utterly untenable the notion that the Beatrice of the *Vita Nuova* is an allegoric figure¹.' The most elaborate and systematic defence of the Realist Theory is probably that of Professor D'Ancona in his valuable edition of the *Vita Nuova*.

(1) We naturally turn first to the positive external evidence.

We must not perhaps lay too much stress on the fact that the author of the *Ottimo Comento*, himself, as he tells us more than once, personally known to Dante, and writing in 1333 or 1334², though not mentioning Beatrice's family name, twice distinctly asserts her literal existence, and Dante's literal, though entirely pure devotion to her ('ch' egli amò con pura benivolenza'). Nor can we venture to adduce with any confidence the very definite statement in the recently discovered recension (of doubtful genuineness) of Pietro di Dante's Commentary among the Ashburnham MSS.³ For practical purposes the external evidence for the identification of the Beatrice of Dante with Beatrice Portinari is limited to the sole authority of Boccaccio's statement to that effect. It is true that he wrote this about forty or fifty years after Dante's death, and it must further be allowed that he was both an uncritical and imaginative writer. But, as has been argued

she has merited' (p. 10). Again, 'Passages that can only refer to the real woman . . . break in as it were into the allegorical narrative, like the wedding music into the story of the Ancient Mariner, giving an air of reality and truth to the whole' (p. 9).

¹ *The New Life*, p. 76. Let it be remembered that Professor Eliot Norton is himself the discoverer of the elaborately artificial construction of the *Vita Nuova* which the writer in the *Quarterly Review* regards as being of such sinister import for the upholders of its literal significance (*Q. R.* p. 46).

² See Witte, *Dante-Forsch.* i. p. 368, for proof of this date.

³ For this see Supplementary Note, pp. 150, 151.

before now, he was himself nine years old when Dante died ; he knew intimately several of Dante's actual relations and closest personal friends, whom he mentions by name, as well as at least one very near relation of Beatrice herself¹. So that he certainly had considerable opportunities for knowing the true facts, if he had the will to record them. Next, it is important to remember that he made this very definite statement in his lectures to a Florentine audience², and that it affected two very well-known contemporary Florentine families, the Bardi having even a European reputation. Among his audience were probably some members, connexions, and friends of both these families, certainly many who were quite able to expose the falseness of Boccaccio's statement, if it were false. And if, as it has been urged in reply to this, the members of both the families concerned would be only too well pleased to let the complimentary fiction pass unchallenged, there would certainly be plenty of others, without any motive for such a conspiracy of silence, before whom Boccaccio would not have dared thus to offer himself to ridicule and exposure. Moreover, if Boccaccio were inventing, why did he invent the gratuitous improbability of making Beatrice a married woman, which is nowhere hinted at by Dante, and, moreover, the wife of a member of one of the most prominent families of Florence ? We should surely require some very strong reasons to the contrary before summarily rejecting a statement of such a kind, and made under such circumstances³.

¹ The details of these references will be found more fully in *Dante and his Early Biographers*, pp. 52-54.

² Viz. in his *Comento sopra la Commedia*, Lezione viii.

³ But even this is not all, for independent documentary evidence furnishes some striking 'undesigned coincidences,' as Paley would call them, in support of Boccaccio's statement of the connexion of the Portinari and Bardi families. One natural result of such a connexion would certainly be that 'interest' would secure for some members of the Portinari family places or agencies in the widespread banking business of the Bardi. Del Lungo (*Beatrice*, &c. p. 21) adduces evidence of no less than five members of the Portinari family being thus employed in the Bardi service. Further, a Boccaccio of Certaldo is also mentioned as a 'fattore' of the bank in 1336-38, so that we have a further link of connexion between Boccaccio and the families with whose names he is supposed to have taken such unwarrantable liberties.

(2) The following considerations may be urged in favour of the substantially real and historical character of the Beatrice of Dante, though, of course, as to her identity with Beatrice Portinari in particular we can never hope to add anything to the slender external evidence already adduced.

It would, we maintain, be an utter anachronism to suppose in Dante, or other writers of that age, an allegory constructed without a basis of fact. Their poetic nature would have 'abhorred such a vacuum.' No less anomalous for us nowadays would be the converse process of seriously attaching an allegorical meaning and purpose to the facts occurring, and the persons met with, in our own daily lives, though such a habit was as natural to the poetic and other serious and thoughtful minds of that age as the use of metaphor to an Oriental writer. In this way they thought that they 'saw into the heart of things,' just as Wordsworth felt in regard to the most ordinary sights and operations in the natural world. At present, however, our main point is to insist that this habit of mind which thus saw 'all things double one against the other' demanded as a sort of axiom—an axiom not only poetical, but we might almost say psychological—that all allegory should rest on a basis of literal fact; that, as a recent writer has expressed it, however ready they were to soar into the air, the first impulse for the flight must be given by a spring from the solid earth¹. Dante himself, in *Conv.* II. i, and xiii, &c., has insisted on this most emphatically. 'The literal meaning must always come first; it is that in which all the other meanings are included; without it it would be impossible and irrational to understand the others; and *above all for the allegorical it is impossible*' (c.i. ll. 66 *seqq.*). This is emphatically repeated no less than four times over in the chapter. The answer commonly given to this, as e.g. by Renier², is that this means 'non reale della vita; basta che sia reale del pensiero'; or again, 'reale pensato, non realtà delle cose'; and we are referred to the

¹ Puccianti, in *Dante e suo Secolo*, i. p. 159.

² *Giornale Storico*, ii. p. 389.

fact that Dante himself makes allegorical use of Cerberus, Geryon, Antaeus, &c., to whom he would not attribute historical reality. So far true. Certainly Dante does not mean that we must never employ a person or event for allegorical purposes, unless we are prepared to defend against all comers their historical reality. But he means much the same as Aristotle means, when he says (in *Poet.* ix. 6) that tragedians τῶν γενομένων ὀνομάτων ἀντέχονται, as contrasted with the purely fictitious nature of the characters in the 'Flower' of Agathon. From this point of view Oedipus or Prometheus will fulfil the necessary conditions, quite as well as Julius Caesar or Henry V. They have a recognized existence, it matters not whether mythical or historical, *outside the poet's brain*. If he were to invent the persons and events on which the allegory was founded, as well as the allegory itself, in himself he might perhaps speak mysteries, but others would not be edified¹. Dante would, as we believe, have regarded such an enterprise not only as a poetical monstrosity, not only as a desperate effort to 'make bricks without straw,' but as an absurdity most aptly illustrated by a man's attempting to 'raise himself by his own waistband.' It is true that allegory, as well as tragedy, has long since outgrown its original limitations. Modern tragedy is no longer restricted to *γεγόμενα ὀνόματα*,

'To Atreus or to Pelops' line,
Or some tale of Troy divine.'

So, also, allegory may now be constructed with characters wholly fictitious—a process with which Bunyan and many succeeding writers have made us familiar. But, again and again it must be urged, the nineteenth century is not the fourteenth; and we must not assume, in the teeth of direct

¹ The same idea seems to be expressed by Matthew Arnold thus: 'Undoubtedly there was a real Beatrice, whom Dante had seen living and moving before him and for whom he had felt a passion. This basis of fact and reality he took from the life of the outward world. *This basis was indispensable to him, for he was an artist*' (*Fraser's Magazine*, May 1863). So D'Ancona, *Discorso*, &c., p. xxxvi: 'Beatrice è donna prima da esser simbolo, e può esser simbolo appunto perché fu donna.'

evidence to the contrary, that earlier writers in this field would thus have attempted

‘to give to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.’

(3) We would appeal to Dante's own practice of applying allegory to other persons, undoubtedly historical, in such a manner as to transform and transfigure them and their actions quite as widely from the reality of fact as anything of this kind that can be adduced in the case of Beatrice. Let us remember, first, the astounding language applied to Cato, both in the *Divina Commedia* and the *Convito*, especially IV. xxviii; the surprising allegory developed out of the story of the three Maries and their visit to the sepulchre in *Conv.* IV. xxii; the mystical significance of the planets in *Conv.* II. xiv; the idealization or allegorization of Virgil, Leah, Rachel, and Matelda, whoever she may be; for, however much that is disputed, no one, I believe, doubts that she is historical. The only possible or apparent exception that occurs to one is the nameless ‘*donna gentile*,’ who typified to Dante Philosophy, as he distinctly asserts in the *Convito*. But it is not to be assumed, nor do I for a moment believe, that she is any exception to Dante's usual practice. If she be Philosophy, and nothing else but Philosophy, one would like to know, as Carducci says, why (in the *Vita Nuova*, § xxxvi) Philosophy should be represented as looking down at young men from an upper window.

While avoiding the details of this second controversy, which is a scarcely less thorny question than that concerning Beatrice herself, one may venture to suggest thus much in general illustration of the incident. In the sympathetic aspect of the ‘*gentil donna*,’ who looked down upon him compassionately from a window, Dante seemed to feel some compensation for the loss of Beatrice (*Vita Nuova*, §§ xxxvi-xxxviii). But the feeling was soon suppressed, for it presented itself as a sort of infidelity to her memory (§ xxxix). Parallel and contemporaneous with this episode was the temporary devotion to Philosophy described in the *Convito*¹, which

¹ See II. xiii, where this mental distraction is connected with the desolation felt at the loss of Beatrice.

seemed to Dante for a time capable of supplying the place of religion in his soul's aspirations—a delusion soon abandoned. Was not Dante likely to regard this resemblance between his outer and his inner life as something more than casual? With a mind keenly alive to such analogies, might he not well say to himself as he looked back on these, and other like events of his past life, 'which things are an allegory,' and behold in them a reflection, not undesigned, of his moral or psychological experience? And thus we see how the 'gentil donna,' while representing Philosophy, is likely to have been a real person quite as much as Beatrice when typifying Theology or Revealed Religion¹.

(4) It may be argued that, apart from any abstract theories about allegory and its proper basis, Dante, in the idealization, allegorization—may we not almost say, apotheosis?—of an existing woman, is but following the custom—but with what an impassable interval!—of other poets of that age. It may of course be said, as indeed it has been said, that perhaps Selvaggia, Giovanna, Fiammetta, and even Laura, are all fictitious together. We cannot stop to argue out this question here for each individual case. One or two words, however, as to Giovanna and Laura may be permitted. If Giovanna were a fiction, what is the point of accusing Guido of having transferred his affections from this fiction to another fiction called Mandetta²? And as to Laura such scepticism is simply absurd, since her existence is as certain as anything in history, and her family survives near Avignon to this day. As then here we are certainly in contact with solid facts, it is worth while briefly to indicate some of the points of resemblance and difference between the cases of Dante and Petrarch. Petrarch first saw Laura in a church in Holy Week, 1327, he being then twenty-three and she twenty years of age. The effect upon him, as upon Dante at a much earlier age, was instantaneous and lifelong. When Petrarch first saw her, she had been already two years married, and she after-

¹ An elaborate discussion of the 'gentil donna' or 'donna pietosa' will be found in the Eighth Annual Report of the American Dante Society, in the Essay by George R. Carpenter, already referred to.

² *Supra*, p. 99.

wards became the mother of a large family of children. She died at the age of forty in 1348. Petrarch and Laura very seldom met or spoke to one another. He was not admitted to her house. There is no evidence, or even suspicion, that she shared his feelings, nay, the reverse is implied in Petrarch's own writings. It is even doubtful whether she was sensible of the passion she inspired; yet he poured forth Sonnets, Canzoni, &c. in her honour for about thirty years. The known facts of her life correspond exactly with the details found in Petrarch's Sonnets and Letters. After her death Petrarch represents her as appearing to him in a vision, and addressing him in language in many respects like that of Beatrice in the *Divina Commedia*, as, for instance, that she it was who withdrew him from the common herd of men (see *Inf.* ii. 105), she who controlled, comforted, strengthened him while in life (see *Purg.* xxx. 121, &c.). But then, with a flagrant error of taste, of which Dante never was and never could be guilty, he goes on to put into her mouth a confession of the warmest love and devotion to himself, of which there was no trace in her life or in fact¹.

Two more points of contrast between Dante and Petrarch are worth mentioning. Dante's was a love of earliest childhood, which was inextinguishable ever after, not one taken up in middle life; and also it was not, like that of Petrarch, for a married woman, either at its first beginning, or indeed for long afterwards.

So much has been said as to the impossibility or unnaturalness of imagining the story of the *Vita Nuova* to be literally true, that, at the risk of tediousness, I cannot refrain from adducing another and more modern parallel, which can hardly be said (at least not yet) to be unhistorical. Goethe's attachment to Gretchen began when he first met her at the age of fifteen; but ten years later, when devoted to Lili, he sketched the story of his love to Gretchen as the first female influence in his life, his love to the later woman

¹ For the above and other details respecting Laura see *Petrarch* by H. Reeve, pp. 33, 34, 43, 59, &c.

*stimulating his memory of the former*¹. Further the boy (*aet.* 15) repulsed by Gretchen was advised by his friends *to betake himself to philosophy*, in order to alleviate his anguish! (compare *Convito* II. xiii, 9 *seqq.*). In reference to Gretchen again, 'the poet-boy's imagination was all aflame, he followed her everywhere, and was in the seventh heaven when coming out of church she nodded in answer to his salutation.' This reads almost like an extract from the *Vita Nuova*. See § iii, and especially 'mi salutò virtuosamente tanto, che mi parve allora vedere tutti i termini della beatitudine' (ll. 13-15).

Once more, Shelley's platonic affection for Emilia Viviani, which inspired the *Epipsychidion* in conscious imitation of the *Vita Nuova* of Dante, shows us how the actual may be wholly transformed into the ideal, though it was on a level far lower both in respect of the actual and ideal than in the case of Dante. 'Emilia beautiful, spiritual, sorrowing, became for Shelley a type and symbol of what Goethe names "the eternal feminine" . . . the ideal of beauty, truth, and love. She was at once a living and a breathing woman . . . and the avatar of the ideal' (Dowden's *Shelley*, ii. p. 378). Shelley desired that this poem should be printed in only 100 copies, because those who were capable of understanding it would certainly not arrive at that number, and he did not wish that 'the vulgar should read it' (*ib.* p. 380). Shelley, however, came afterwards to acknowledge that 'the person celebrated in it was a cloud instead of a Juno.'

To return from these digressions, we may assert generally that as in the later case of Petrarch, where facts are indisputable, so also in the earlier cases of the poets of the Siculo-Provençal and Bolognese schools, those who are most familiar with that literature find it impossible to disbelieve or doubt that in each instance (as in the very similar case of knightly service) the poet's inspiration was derived from the 'cult' of some real person. There is no doubt, at any rate in several cases, as to the reality of the person, whatever

¹ Much of this is taken from an article in the *Nineteenth Century* for Nov. 1884 entitled 'Faust, "Ein Fragment."'

may be thought as to the reality of the 'cult.' And so in Dante's 'cult' of Beatrice Portinari, and his resolve, in the true spirit and language of the chivalrous or troubadour poet, 'dire di lei quello che mai non fu detto di alcuna,' he was but the Homer of a cyclic group¹, although, like Homer,

'sopra gli altri com' aquila vola.'

They painted the object of their poetic adoration with every attribute of physical perfection, grace, and courtesy: Dante struck out a wholly new line when he adorned his ideal with every quality of spiritual perfection. When she first crossed his path she flitted before his boyish imagination as an angel from heaven, and even then 'too good for this world.' Then for several years, seeing her seldom, speaking to her never, memory and fancy were free to expatiate 'unhampered by facts,' till her ideal perfections haunted him more and more, and became the absorbing passion of his life. She seemed already to be something divine. A profound melancholy hung over him from the presentiment that her life was a frail one, touched already with the shadow of death. She seemed destined to be soon removed to a Heavenly sphere more suited to her gentle perfections. Though 'in the world,' it was as though she were not 'of it,' and when she was gone, she seemed to him to become a fitting embodiment of the Revelation of Divine and Heavenly things.

(5) We must call attention once more to the multitude of realistic details, purporting to be facts, recorded by Dante of Beatrice, some of them minute and almost trivial², many of them such as do not lend themselves to any allegorical purpose that can with any show of plausibility be suggested, some of them even repugnant to any such purpose. By this we mean that they are not only inexplicable, but also so inappropriate and unideal that one cannot conceive any

¹ The same pre-eminence belongs also to the *Divina Commedia* when compared with the 'cyclic group' of imaginary journeys to the Unseen World found in mediaeval literature.

² The same argument is conspicuously applicable in the case of the fourth Gospel, as against the theory that it is a mere unhistorical *Tendenz-Schrift*.

reason for their being set down except that they actually occurred. Let us rapidly enumerate, without any classification or comment, some of these incidents. The precise statements as to the death of Beatrice, her exact age at her death, the actual date, day, month, and year of her death, a date, as we have seen, inconvenient and intractable for the interpretation which Dante desires to put upon it (*sup.* p. 123)—the death of her friend¹ and the death of her father²—this last corresponding, be it observed, exactly with the known date of the death of Folco Portinari, which took place a few months before the date given by Dante as that of Beatrice's death, as has been already mentioned. There is also the definite statement that she was 'one of the Christians of the thirteenth century³,' and she is described as having been born and having lived and died in a definite city, though its name is not actually mentioned (see § xli. l. 8, and § vi. l. 9). Dante's own sorrow was real and literal; it affected his health, his appearance, his eyesight, the actual symptoms and remedies of the last-named injury being minutely described⁴. Further, we have what an advocate of the Ideal theory has called the 'enormity' of the *gabbo*⁵, or mockery of Dante by Beatrice at the marriage-feast, the strange conduct of Dante respecting the lady (or, rather, two ladies) of the 'screen,' and his other devices to conceal his affection both from the object of it and from the world generally, and the inexplicable statement made by Dante to excuse his silence as to the details of Beatrice's death—viz. lest he should become 'loda-tore di sè medesimo⁶.' These and other similar difficulties

¹ *V. N.* § viii.

² *Ib.* § xxii.

³ *Ib.* § xxx.

⁴ *V. N.* §§ xxiii and xl; and in the plain prose of *Conv.* III. ix. 147 *seqq.*

⁵ Viz. Renier in *Gior. Stor.* ii. p. 38a.

⁶ The explanation of this passage (*V. N.* § xxix) is passed over in convenient silence by most Commentators; it is abandoned as hopeless by Witte, D'Ancona, Torri, Carducci, &c. Some have supposed it to imply that Beatrice, when dying, declared with her last breath her true affection for and devotion to Dante himself. Renier (*Gior. Stor.* ii. p. 393) says that it means that Dante shrinks from extolling further the creation of his own intellect. Scartazzini (*Prolog.* p. 194) thinks that Dante could not speak further of her death without referring to his own numerous compositions in her honour, and thus extolling their 'dolce stil nuovo' (*Purg.* xxiv. 57). Aroux alone finds no difficulty, since Beatrice is nothing else but the soul of Dante himself personified!

appear, even in proportion to their difficulty, to be arguments in favour of their real occurrence, on the principle which has been already indicated. Nor must we forget the very precise language of *Purg.* xxx and xxxi as to the literal death of Beatrice, and how she was literally buried, and her 'flesh saw corruption'.¹

(6) We have one or two external testimonies not to be overlooked. There is the beautiful *canzone* of Cino da Pistoia, one of Dante's most intimate friends, beginning,

'Avvegna che io aggio più per tempo',²

in which he administers to him consolation, when crushed with sorrow at the death of Beatrice, in language of the most touching and apparently deeply felt sympathy. It is difficult to suppose that any one could read this without being convinced that the feelings on both sides are real, genuine, and heartfelt; or could believe that this exquisite composition is nothing but an academic exercise on an artificial thesis. Then, again, there is a sonnet of Cino³, in which he mentions, among other faults of Dante's great work, these two: first, that in his conversation with Sordello (*Purg.* vi) he does not name Onesto di Boncima, who was on a level with Arnaldo Daniello; and, secondly, that he does not place beside Beatrice in Abraham's bosom her who 'joined Mount Sion to the Apennines'—i.e. (as Rossetti explains) Selvaggia, who sanctified the Apennines by her burial on the Monte della

¹ See especially *Purg.* xxx. 127, and xxxi. 48-51. It is worthy of remark that Dante only once mentions Beatrice *by name* when speaking to any of the spirits whom he meets in the *Purgatorio*, viz. in his conversation with his friend and kinsman Forese Donati. See *Purg.* xxiii. 128. D'Ancona suggests that this is accounted for by his personal intimacy with Forese (ll. 115-117), who would therefore understand, as others might not, the reference to Beatrice. On the other hand, Forese could have no knowledge of the allegorical meaning of Beatrice. We might add that it is an interesting illustration of Dante's surprising attention to the smallest points of realistic detail.

² p. 9, ed. Barbèra. Translated by Rossetti in *Dante and his Circle*, p. 184. It is interesting to note that Dante quotes this very *canzone* as an illustration of the 'grand style' in *De Vulg. Eloq.* II. vi.

³ p. 138, ed. Barbèra. Translated by Rossetti (*op. cit.*), p. 197. See also Cino's *Lamentation for Selvaggia*, pp. 192, 193 of Rossetti's collection.

Sambuca. Once more, there is that curious sonnet (xxxii) addressed by Dante himself to Guido Cavalcanti, beginning,

‘Guido, vorrei che tu e Lapo ed io,’

in which he wishes that Guido, Lapo Gianni, and himself were all together in a barque with their three ladies, to sail over the seas and talk of nothing but love—Lady Vanna, Lady Bice, and the lady who was thirtieth on his roll, referring to the *sirventese* mentioned in *V. N.* § vi, and in particular thus denoting Lagia, the lady of his friend and contemporary Lapo Gianni. It certainly does not seem likely that such language should be used of three abstract ideals; or that, if they were ideals or symbols only, and that of a very exalted kind, they would ever have been spoken of in such terms of familiar intercourse, not to say of endearment, as Vanna and Bice instead of Giovanna and Beatrice. It may be mentioned that Folco Portinari in his will refers familiarly to his daughter as Bice. (See *supra*, p. 98.)

(7) Lastly, it is surely quite inconceivable, if Beatrice were a mere abstraction—an ideal, a symbol, and nothing more—that Dante should have assigned her a definite place in heaven, and indeed a most exalted place, treating her as a human soul among other human souls, and associating her with none but absolutely real and historic personages, though many of them are subjected to allegorical treatment in quite as high a degree as herself. Nor is it enough to say that that exalted place is but the due of the thing symbolized, i.e. the Church, or Revelation, or Faith, for this would not tend to justify such a discordant and inartistic cross-division in the ranks of the heavenly host. So again, at the very beginning of the *Inferno*, Beatrice sends Virgil to Dante (*Inf.* ii. 52 *seqq.*), and Virgil ultimately leads Dante back to Beatrice. Faith employs the services of Reason, and Reason becomes an ‘aid to Faith’.¹ But whether this be the exact symbolism intended or not, is it conceivable that one of the pair of

¹ See *Purg.* xviii. 46:—

‘Quanto ragion qui vede
Dirti poss’ io; da indi in là t’ aspetta
Pure a Beatrice; ch’ opera è di fede.’

symbolical characters is an actual person and the other a baseless abstraction? We certainly should not find in Dante—probably not in any writer of that age—types and ideals thus ‘unequally yoked together’ with persons and realities. Such an anomaly, such a discord, such a flaw or ‘fault’ in the symmetry of a most carefully constructed system, and in a writer with such a sense of order as Dante, and one withal so profoundly impressed with the solemn reality of his subject, would be simply inconceivable.

It remains to say a few words on the recently suggested modification of the Realist theory, which we have above described as the ‘Separatist’ view, viz. that Beatrice was a real person certainly, but as certainly *not* Beatrice Portinari¹. Most of the arguments which we have hitherto adduced tend to support the Realist hypothesis generally, but not to discriminate between these two forms of it. But in favour of the older view we have—first, the direct statement of Boccaccio, given, as we have maintained, under conditions that afford a considerable guarantee for its credibility, but as to the value of which the most widely different opinions are nevertheless held. Further, we have more than one definite point of contact, as has been already pointed out, between the details given by Dante and known facts concerning the Portinari family. So that we have at any rate some *point d'appui* for the ordinary theory, which at least entitles us to say that the ‘burden of proof’ lies with its opponents. They are surely bound to show that the statement of Boccaccio is improbable to the verge of incredibility. If not, Beatrice Portinari at least ‘holds the field,’ and, moreover, she is at any rate a definite known historic personality, whereas her modernly devised and unsubstantial rival is as difficult to attack as Milton’s angels, since she is admittedly wholly unknown and unknowable. Her existence is merely postulated, like that of an invisible planet, to account for certain observed facts and phenomena, and to afford an escape from certain admitted difficulties, and further, as we are inclined to add, to do this in such a manner as to satisfy the canons

¹ Compare the view of Scherillo described *supra*, p. 94, note.

of propriety and probability according with the experience of the nineteenth century. We may take it that Scartazzini's elaborate array of fifteen arguments (*Prol.* pp. 191 *seqq.*) represents both in quantity and quality the utmost strength of the 'Separatist' case. Without going through these arguments in detail we may criticize them briefly as follows:—

(i) Some at least of them are extremely weak and even trivial, as the author seems conscious when he pleads that, though they are not all of equal weight, their numerical or united force may count for something. Under this head we may class Nos. (1) and (2), that the rarity of the meetings of Dante and Beatrice, especially as he sought for her (see *V. N.* §§ ii and iii), would be *impossible* (?), since the houses of the two families were near together. (We need not stop to offer different possible explanations which readily suggest themselves.) Also No. (5), that we can infer Beatrice Portinari to have been older than the Beatrice of Dante, since she is spoken of in her father's will dated 1287 as already married. (But as she was then nearly twenty-one, there is nothing impossible or even improbable in this). So again, the bare assertion, which can be met with an equally bare denial, that the narrative of *V. N.* § xviii is 'absolutely impossible' if Beatrice were then married (No. 6). (ii) Some rest on the most baseless assumptions, as, for instance, No. (3), that Beatrice cannot possibly have been married when she denied her salutation to Dante¹, as she could then have no *interest* (!) in the evil reports current concerning him. This assumes in fact that she could have no motive but the *spretæ injuriæ formæ*, though Dante himself is careful to assign a totally different reason². Or again (No. 14), that the language of *Inf.* ii. 61 ('L' amico mio,' &c.) and 72 ('Amor mi mosse,' &c.) would imply 'conjugal infidelity' on the part of a married woman! Surely this is innocent language enough in any case, and Scartazzini can scarcely have forgotten that, whoever Beatrice was, Dante, who is responsible for this language, was a married man, and that much stronger language of Petrarch respecting Laura is not thought to involve any

¹ *V. N.* § x.

² See the passage quoted *supra*, p. 127.

such terrible implication as this against either of them¹. (iii) The force of several other of these arguments depends entirely on the familiar fallacy of criticizing the conduct and motives of the thirteenth century by the ideas of the nineteenth. As for instance (No. 12), that if Beatrice were a married woman the *Vita Nuova* is the record of *amori illeciti*² (!), and (No. 13) that some of the language of the *Convito* would be open to the same objection; or (No. 10) that the undisguised grief of Dante at the death of another man's wife is 'a psychological impossibility.' (Again we may refer to the case of Petrarch and Laura.) Or (No. 11) that Dante's remorse for his temporary attachment to the *gentil donna* after the death of Beatrice³ would be 'an insoluble enigma'; or (No. 9) that the request of the brother of Beatrice that Dante would write a sonnet in her memory⁴ would be strange 'unless he were a blockhead' (*balordo*).

'Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis'

is a sufficient reply to such arguments as these. (iv) Finally,

¹ The very unfair use thus made of the single word *amor* puts this argument on a level with that of Bartoli, which was cited *supra*, p. 127. (See also what has been said, p. 118.) The possibility of such misuse of Dante's language makes it necessary to insist most emphatically that, unlike Petrarch (see p. 136), Dante never once hints or suggests any reciprocation of affection (in the popular sense of the word) on the part of Beatrice. She takes a deep, and from the higher standpoint of her spiritual elevation, we may say, a mother-like interest in his welfare, for that is the image to which Dante more than once likens it:—

'Gli occhi drizzò ver me con quel sembiante
Che madre fa sopra figliuol deliro.' (*Par.* i. 101-2.)

And again:—

'Così la madre al figlio par superba,
Com' ella parve a me; per che d' amaro
Sente il sapor della pietate acerba.' (*Purg.* xxx. 79-81.)

(Does not our Lord under similar circumstances address His disciples as 'Little children'? S. John xiii. 33.) And so 'stooping only to pity, never to love, she saves him from destruction, saves him from hell' (Ruskin, *Sesame*, p. 84).

² This argument verges (to say the least) upon downright vulgarity when Scartazzini proceeds to enlarge upon the 'viltà e codardia' of Simone de' Bardi in allowing Dante to speak and write as he did of his deceased wife, without inflicting chastisement upon him ('senza darsene briga, senza vendicarsene')! It is enough to say (in the language of Matthew Arnold) 'the love of Dante was of an order too pure and noble to occasion distrust, even if the purity of Beatrice had not placed her above suspicion.'

³ *V. N.* §§ xxxvi-xl.

⁴ *Ib.* § xxxiii.

in other arguments stress is laid by Scartazzini upon the difficulties involved in such points as the reason alleged by Dante for not describing more fully the death of Beatrice¹ (No. 7); the circumstances of the marriage-feast² (No. 4); the letter 'ai principi della terra' on the occasion of her death³ (No. 8); and the reproaches of Dante by Beatrice in the *Purgatorio*, Canto xxx, &c. (No. 15). But these difficulties are little, if at all, greater—some, we maintain, are even less—on the strict Realist theory than on any other, and certainly cannot be thought to be removed, or even diminished, by the theory advocated by Scartazzini.

In conclusion I should like to make two general observations.

(1) It is to be noted that the Realists do not for a moment deny the truth of the Symbolist, much less of the Idealist, theories. It is fully admitted not only that both may be true, but that they certainly do contain very large elements of truth. Speaking of their general principles, not of all the applications in detail, their advocates, as is so often the case in controversy, are right in most of what they affirm, and only, or chiefly, wrong in what they deny. In their assertions there is very much truth, but it is not, as they maintain, the whole truth. We only contend that side by side with these theories, and as a necessary basis for them, some form of the Realist theory must also be held. It may even be allowed that 'the allegorical is as superior to the literal meaning as the mind is to the body⁴,' yet we should not therefore be able to dispense with the body, or be justified in denying its reality.

D'Ancona (one of the most prominent champions of the Realist theory) admits that we may trace, even in the *Vita Nuova* itself, three stages in the language used about Beatrice: 'At the beginning she is a real woman, next she is a living personification, finally she is an animated symbol (*donna reale*

¹ *V. N.* § xxix (see *supra*, p. 139, n. 6).

² *Ib.* § xiv (*supra*, pp. 96 and 126).

³ *Ib.* § xxxi (see *supra*, p. 101).

⁴ Cf. S. Aug. *de Catech. Rud.* ix, 'Ita esse praeponendas verbis sententias ut praeponitur animus corpori.'

... *vivente personificazione . . . simbolo animato*), the last uniting, combining, and including the two former. As soon as in respect of Beatrice memory takes the place of sight, then begins that transfiguration of her which finds its completion in the *Divina Commedia*¹. Or, as we might put it, employing another metaphor, Beatrice is at last 'transubstantiated' into a spiritual being without losing her attributes of a living person as known to Dante upon earth. 'She shifts' (as Mr. Lowell says in his *Essay on Dante*, p. 76), 'as the controlling emotion or the poetic fitness of the moment dictates, from a woman loved and lost to a gracious exhalation of all that is fairest in womanhood, or most divine in the soul of man, and ere the eye has defined the new image it has become the old one again, or another mingled of both.'

In fact there is now a considerable *rapprochement* between the extreme combatants in this field of controversy. Few Realists would now deny that there is a very large admixture of allegory and idealization in the narrative of the *Vita Nuova*. They would be content to insist that it was 'founded upon fact.' On the other hand, many Idealists and Symbolists would be willing to allow a substratum of fact though they would minimize its amount and depreciate its importance. The precise relation between these elements must remain finally indeterminate, for lack of sufficient positive evidence.

(2) The other observation is this. *Every* theory has its difficulties; we are very far from pretending that all is clear and straightforward on the Realist theory. It is a most extraordinary fact that Dante has so written that no one, either near his own time or for six hundred years since, has ever been able to give one clear and consistent explanation of his meaning. No one has ever yet been able so to enter into his frame of mind, so to see things with his eyes, as to make his thoughts and language appear natural, or even consistently intelligible. We can scarcely hope, as we move further and further away from the scenes and thoughts, the mental, social, political, religious environment in which he moved, that that supreme point of view will ever now

¹ D'Ancona, *Discorso*, p. xlvii.

be reached. Between that strange age and ours 'there is a great gulf fixed,' and it is an ever widening gulf. We feel that its 'thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor its ways our ways.' In the words of Goethe:—

'Mein Freund, die Zeiten der Vergangenheit
Sind uns ein Buch mit sieben Siegeln.'

One of the most remarkable features of contrast between that age and ours, or at any rate between the mind of Dante and that of our age, is this. Dante firmly believed that he lived in a world of mystery, not one that

'should exist
Only to be examined, pondered, searched,
Probed, vexed and criticized¹.'

It was for him a world in which 'things are not what they seem' only or even mainly. All things were 'double one against the other²,' and he loved to trace the analogies between his mental and spiritual experience and that of his outward life. All the events of both seemed providentially ordered to illustrate each other³. The colours were repeated, though with a difference, as in the double rainbow:—

'Due archi paralleli e concolori.'

Nor, I think, would Dante have hesitated to carry on the comparison in this feature also:—

'Nascendo di quel d' entro quel di fuori⁴.'

or, in other words, to maintain that there was *greater* truth and reality in the allegorical and mystical meaning of things than in their literal and outward aspect. This appears clearly in the *Convito*, and especially in such a passage as this:—'Poichè la *litterale* sentenza è sufficientemente dimos-

¹ Wordsworth, *Excursion*, bk. iv.

² Dante would certainly have smiled—and we can well imagine what a grim smile it would be—at the stolid incapacity (*grossezza*) of some modern critics, who cannot see any possible connexion between the former and latter divisions of Psalm xix, and who therefore lay it down that we have here a fortuitous combination of unconnected poems!

³ See *supra*, pp. 135, 136.

⁴ *Par.* xii. 11, 13.

trata, è da procedere alla sposizione *allegorica e vera*' (II. xiii). So Professor Caird:—'To the highest consciousness of the Middle Ages it might almost be said that the parts were inverted [in comparison with the Homeric conception] and that the world of the living was but a shadowy appearance, through which the eternal realities of another world were continually betraying themselves' (*Essays*, &c., i. p. 10). This frame of mind is so unlike our own (scarcely less so than that of the mythopoeic age itself), that we strain our eyes to pierce the cloud of allegory and symbol by which Dante has veiled the events of his outer life, and strive in vain to detect the plain historic facts which lie behind the veil. We have no canons of criticism by which to disentangle what has been thus blended together. We run the risk of 'euhemerizing,' or evaporating too much into myth; or else of the opposite error, of crystallizing too much into fact¹.

It is then for us a choice of difficulties, but in that case we must endeavour to move along 'the line of least resistance,' and that we venture unhesitatingly to assert is found in the admission of an historical Beatrice, the circumstances and incidents of whose life were substantially and in the main such as Dante has recorded in the *Vita Nuova*. For in two ways, at any rate, the difficulties are less formidable for the Realist theory than for the others.

(i) They are at least not difficulties gratuitously invented by the author. If, as the other theories suppose, he invented all the would-be facts and events himself, he must have invented them with a purpose, and a theory which professes to supply the key to his purpose is bound to show that it fits the lock, or, in other words, that it satisfactorily accounts for these arbitrarily or voluntarily invented details, or at least a considerable proportion of them. This is a difficulty

¹ Dante in *Conv.* II. i. declares that writings '*si possono intendere e debboni sponere massimamente per quattro sensi*,' viz. literal, allegorical, moral, and 'anagogic,' i.e. spiritual. His son Pietro in the introduction to his Commentary is not satisfied with less than seven senses, viz. literal, historical, apologetical, metaphorical, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical (which last word, by the way, he derives from '*ana*, quod est *supra*, et *goge*, quod est *ducere*'! p. 7).

from which the Realists are free. They, at any rate, are not bound to justify the artistic propriety or significance of every detail. All they have to say is: We suppose that the fact so happened, and that therefore it is recorded. It might have been better, perhaps, for some reasons, or more 'ideal,' if it had happened otherwise; but, if so, 'tant pis pour les faits,' for, as D'Ancona says, 'la storia è nemica spesso alla poesia.'

(ii) There is a radical difference 'in kind' between the difficulties which we have to acknowledge on this supposition and those which we are asked to overlook on the rival theories. The former are mostly, if not all, such as we can at least imagine or believe to depend on differences of 'time and place and men's manners' in different and distant ages. If not removed, they are conceivably removable. Faith as to this is at least possible, and even rational, though reason cannot be wholly satisfied. On any other supposition than that of 'realism,' in some form, we have to face difficulties and to swallow improbabilities (as we venture to claim that some of the extracts and arguments above given amply show) which run counter to reason itself, sometimes conflicting with established historical facts, and sometimes with such fundamental principles of experience and common sense as we cannot suppose to be modified by time or place:

οὐ γάρ τι νῦν γε καχθής, ἀλλ' αἰεί ποτε
ζῆ ταῦτα.

We might illustrate the difference thus: it is like having to choose between two hypotheses, one of which involved the supposition of a world in which the law of gravitation did not hold (which, however difficult or improbable, is at least conceivable); and the other, that of a world in which the laws of thought, or the axioms of mathematics, could no longer be depended upon.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

On a recently discovered recension of the Commentary of Pietro di Dante (see p. 130 supra).

I HAVE not ventured to adduce this evidence in the text, because it could not be brought into the controversy without a long and elaborate discussion to prove its genuineness. This would be out of place here, nor do I feel confident that it would be successful. But the facts may be briefly explained as follows. Among the MSS. lately forming part of the magnificent library of Lord Ashburnham (now alas! no longer in England), in one, distinguished as No. 841, there was recently discovered a recension of the Commentary of Pietro di Dante differing very considerably from that which is ordinarily found. Since that discovery indeed, it turns out that the Ashburnham MS. does not stand alone, for a MS. in the Barberini Library is said substantially to agree with it, and so to some extent also, but less closely, does another in the Vatican collection (see *Gietmann*, p. 149). These two recensions in fact open up a controversy very similar to that which exists respecting the two forms of the *Vita di Boccaccio*, a matter which I have discussed elsewhere in my little book on *Dante and his Early Biographers* (1890). The following are the principal passages bearing on this subject. In the notes on *Inf.* ii we read: 'Et quia modo hic primo de Beatrice fit mentio, de qua tantus est sermo, maxime infra in tertio libro Paradisi, premittendum est quod revera quedam domina nomine Beatrix, insignis valde moribus et pulcritudine, tempore auctoris vixit in civitate Florentie, nata de domo quorundam civium Florentinorum qui dicuntur Portinari, de qua Dantes auctor proculus fuit, et amator in vita dicte domine, et in eius laudem fecit multas cantilenas, qua mortua, ut [in] eius nomen in famam levaret, in hoc suo poemate sub allegoria et typo theologie eam ut plurimum accipere voluit.' And again, commenting on *Purg.* xxxi, he says: 'Posthoc auctor mystice loquens, scilicet ad literam in hoc passu et allegorice, inducit ipsam Beatricem non sub typo theologie sed ut animam ipsius Beatricis mulieris iam corporaliter defuncte ad reprehendendum eum, ut olim eius proculum,' &c. Now these statements as to the reality of Beatrice and her identification with Beatrice Portinari are as positive and precise as those of Boccaccio. If they are the words of Pietro di Dante, and if, further, they could be shown to belong to the earliest form of his Commentary (i.e. before 1340), *cadit quaestio*, as the strongest advocates

of the opposite view would admit (e.g. Professor Renier). But all this increased definiteness of detail is very suspicious and strongly suggestive of a *rifacimento*, an edition, as we say, 'revised and enlarged.' Even so, two alternatives are possible. (1) It might be by the author himself. In that case it might fairly be maintained (as by Gietmann) that, since he did not mention all this at first, he probably knew nothing about it, and he is either repeating Boccaccio, or they are both drawing from a common source. (2) More probably, it is an unauthorized rewriting of the original work by an anonymous and unknown person. This certainly seems to have been the case with the *Vita di Boccaccio*, and there is reason to suppose that such treatment of an author was not then uncommon. (See *Early Biographers*, p. 45.) On either supposition the alleged independent authority of Dante's own son for the legend is lost, and we are left, as before, alone with Boccaccio. At the same time it is remarkable that a critic generally so exacting and sceptical as Bartoli appears to accept fully the authority of this recension, and he has adopted in consequence such a modification of his previous views on this question as is necessary to bring them into conformity with it. See *Lett. Ital.* VI. parte i. p. 14 n. After first saying 'Non cambia in nulla ciò che io penso della Beatrice Dantesca. Per me la *Vita Nuova* è sempre il libro dell' idealità femminile,' he qualifies this by adding, 'Solo dopo la scoperta del mio carissimo Rocca, ammetto che Dante possa *esser giunto a questo concetto dell' idealità, partendo dalla realtà della donna amata*, la quale così gli avrebbe fornita l' occasione di tessere la storia del suo pensiero.' (The subject will be found discussed at greater length by Rocca, who first noticed this recension, in *Giornale Storico*, 1886, pp. 366, &c.; by the same writer in his book *Di Alcuni Commenti della Divina Commedia*, Florence, 1891, cap. vi; and by Gietmann in *Beatrice: Geist und Kern*, &c., pp. 146, &c.)

III. THE CLASSIFICATION OF SINS IN THE *INFERNO* AND *PURGATORIO*

THAT there are very many designed parallelisms both of resemblance and contrast between the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* must be obvious to the most casual reader. This applies both to the general plan and to incidents in detail. The latter are so numerous that pages might be filled with their enumeration. We propose, however, to limit ourselves here to the resemblances and contrasts offered by Dante's treatment of sins in their relation and classification in these two *Cantiche*.

One general point of resemblance presents itself at once, viz. that sins increase in gravity as they are lower down, and this applies to their relative position both in the pit of Hell and upon the Mountain of Purgatory. As, however, Dante is *descending* in the former case and *ascending* in the latter, he naturally meets with the graver sins last in Hell, and in Purgatory *vice versa*. It is equally natural, this principle being admitted, that we should find certain obvious and undoubted resemblances between the sins in the higher Circles of Hell and those on the higher *Cornici* of Purgatory. Whether this applies also, as we should certainly expect, to the *lower* divisions in each case is far from obvious, and this is, in fact, the very disputed point which we have chiefly in this Essay to consider.

But as to the admitted and indisputable fact that in both cases the descending order in the list of sins corresponds with their increasing guilt, one remark may be made. This

follows as a necessary consequence from a very general principle enunciated by Dante in *Conv.* III. iii, and often elsewhere assumed and referred to by him, viz. that all created things naturally 'go to their own place.' He proves (*Conv.* l. c.) that *corpora simplici* as well as *corpora composte* 'hanno amore naturato in sè al loro loco proprio.' The same law holds good even in the hierarchies of Angels (*Par.* xxviii), for those that partake most of the Divine Nature are nearest locally to God. The same is true also of the relative position in glory of the souls of the redeemed, having regard to the form of Goodness or Virtue in which they were each most conspicuous. It is the same law which still prevails

'in cielo, in terra, e nel mal mondo !'

For according to the teaching of Dante the soul of man came forth from God, and therefore naturally struggles to return to Him. For the former statement see *Purg.* xxv. ll. 67-75 ; and for the latter, *Purg.* xvii. 109-111, 127-129, *Par.* iv. 124-132, xxviii. 106-111, and many other passages. Now it is only sin which prevents this natural tendency from fulfilling itself ; it is this which drags down the soul, and, so far as it still exists, or any traces of it remain, makes it impossible for the soul to rise, or to 'see God.' Hence, *therefore*, the greater the sin, the further is the soul depressed and borne away from God, not only morally and spiritually, but even *locally*, until, in the extremest case of all, it reaches the point of the universe which is furthest removed from Him,

'il punto

Al qual si traggon d' ogni parte i pesi¹.'

On the other hand, in Purgatory, as sin after sin is removed, the soul, by a sort of natural buoyancy, rises upwards to return to God, and, if it did not so rise, it would be as *unnatural* as that 'a living flame should lie passive on the ground'—

'Come a terra quiete in foco vivo².'

¹ *Inf.* xix. 11.

² *Inf.* xxxiv. 111.

³ *Par.* i. 141. Comp. also *Purg.* iv. 92, 93 ; xii. 121-126.

So much then as to the sort of 'natural law in the spiritual world' which governs the relative position of the sins described both in Hell and Purgatory.

I. THE INFERNO.

But when we pass from this general principle to try and determine the system of Classification of Sins in detail adopted in the *Inferno*, we embark on a most controverted subject, especially in regard to the relation which it bears to that found in the *Purgatorio*. The results are tantalizingly both like and unlike. Desperate efforts have been made to reduce the two systems to a preconceived harmony. But if, as is not only probable, but, in my own opinion, almost certain, Dante deliberately intended them to be different, we need not be surprised at the signal failure of all such efforts. The central and fixed point in this discussion is the system embodied in the *Purgatorio*. That admits of no doubt, and we must therefore first very briefly explain this, in order that we may be in possession of the main conditions of the problem. Dante here quite obviously follows the classification of the familiar Seven Deadly or Mortal Sins, *Peccata capitalia*, or *principalia*, which, if not authoritatively proclaimed by the Church, is recognized, though with considerable variation in order and detail, by numerous Church writers. And not only does he obviously follow this system, but in *Purg.* xvii he explains in detail the principles on which he considers the classification to be based. To this, as well as to the variations of detail referred to, we shall return later. But now we naturally ask, does Dante give us any similar insight into his plan in the case of the *Inferno*? Certainly he does, and, after his manner, he marks these passages, which correspond in their purport and character, with several points of similarity in the surrounding details. Thus in Purgatory Dante and Virgil have reached the *Cornice* of *Accidia*, when, with appropriate symbolism, Dante represents all his powers of action to have become numb, and, as it

were, paralyzed (see xvii. ll. 73 *seqq.*). As progress has thus become impossible, he suggests to Virgil that the time should not be lost—

‘Se i piè si stanno, non stea tuo sermone.’ (l. 84.)

Virgil replies that, if Dante will attend to his discourse, the enforced delay will not be fruitless (ll. 89, 90). Now let us note the curious parallelism with the passage in *Inf.* xi, in which a similar ‘table of contents’ is introduced for the *Inferno*. There also there is an enforced delay, which is caused by the need to accustom the senses to the appalling stench which arises from the *basso Inferno*, or the lower pit of Hell, on the edge of which they were then standing, after traversing the broad plain which is occupied by the burning tombs of the Heresiarchs. This precaution is necessary before the descent can be ventured upon (see xi. l. 4 and ll. 10–12). So they shelter themselves conveniently behind the massive tomb of an heretical¹ Pope (Anastasius II, ll. 7–9), and then (l. 13) Dante (exactly as in the parallel passage in the *Purgatorio*) asks Virgil to devise some means of spending the time profitably. Then follows an elaborate discourse on the divisions and subdivisions of sins *in the lower Circles of Hell*, which they are about to enter, as well as (and this is important to note) on their relation to those that have been already treated of, so that the passage is thus made to enounce a connected plan or scheme of Classification of Sins, applicable to the whole *Cantica* of the *Inferno*. Observe that Dante emphasizes this by declaring to Virgil that, while satisfied as to the account of the order of the sins in the *basso Inferno*, he does not yet understand the relation which it bears to the sins whose punishment they have witnessed in the Circles of Hell already traversed. (See ll. 70–75.) This pointed question, as well as the marked circumstances of resemblance under which the schemes in the *Purgatorio* and *Inferno* are introduced, may be taken as an indication that they are meant to occupy a corresponding

¹ It should in justice be noted that, in making this charge, Dante has been probably misled by contemporary authorities.

position, as a sort of 'official' statement of the plan adopted in either *Cantica* respectively.

To understand the plan here set forth for the *Inferno*, it is necessary to recapitulate briefly the progress which has been made in the preceding Cantos. We need not go back beyond Canto iv, where the first Circle of the *Inferno* proper is reached. Canto iii is concerned with the *Ante-Inferno*, which holds a position corresponding with the *Ante-Purgatorio* in the next *Cantica*. The first Circle, in Canto iv, is occupied by Limbo, in which were confined 'in sorrow yet without pain' ('duol senza martiri,' iv. 28) the virtuous heathen and unbaptized infants. In Circle II is punished the sin of *Incontinence* (in the modern and restricted sense), and this occupies Canto v. In Circle III and Canto vi *Gluttony* is punished; in Circle IV and Canto vii, *Avarice and Prodigality*; and in Circle V, and in the latter part of Canto vii, and also in viii, *Anger*. After the check received at the gates of the City of Dis at the beginning of Canto ix, the sixth Circle is entered, and its description is continued in Canto x. This Circle is occupied by the *Heretics*. Then they approach the descent into the pit of Hell (*basso Inferno*), as already explained, in Canto xi, where this comprehensive scheme of the Classification of Sins is formally propounded.

Now this must be very carefully studied, without any prepossessions which would tempt us to read into or between the lines of Dante more than he explicitly states. In l. 16 we find that the *basso Inferno*, i.e. the part 'dentro da cotesti sassi,' is divided into three Circles like those already passed through. They are here called *cerchietti*, because their diameter is, from the nature of the descending conical pit, necessarily smaller. Then in ll. 22-24 is enounced the central principle of this threefold division. It is founded in the first place on the broad distinction between crimes effected by *violence* and those effected by *fraud*: the latter (fraud) being much worse, since it is due to a perversion of man's peculiar gift of reason, and is consequently more displeasing to God; wherefore these sinners are lower

down in the pit and are more severely punished (ll. 25-27). The Violent are all included in the first of these Circles (No. VII), though it is subdivided into three *gironi*, according as the violence is done against one's neighbour, against oneself, or against God and Nature¹. The Fraudulent fall into two classes so essentially different that each class has a separate *cerchio* of its own, and these form the two remaining and lowest Circles of Hell, i. e. the eighth and the ninth. Each of these also has several subdivisions. The vital distinction is that Fraud when practised merely upon a fellow-man breaks a natural bond and nothing more (ll. 52-56), while that which is practised on those who trust us on grounds of relationship, friendship, plighted faith, or benefaction, breaks, besides this, a bond of a far more sacred description. The sin of Treachery, therefore, in its various forms, is punished for ever in the lowest depth of Hell, in company with the Arch-Traitor Lucifer,

‘ov’ è il punto
Dell’ universo in su che Dite siede.’ (l. 64.)

Dante expresses himself as perfectly satisfied with this explanation, so far as the Circles *yet to come* are concerned, but fails to see how it explains the lighter punishment inflicted upon those that have been already dealt with. In other words, he wishes to know on what grounds the further distinction is made between all those who are plunged into the pit of Hell, including both the Violent and Fraudulent, and those who are more lightly punished in the several Circles outside of it. But, before we pass on to the answer given to this entirely new and supplementary question, let us inquire as to the source from which Dante derived the principle already enunciated. There can, I think, be no doubt, as I have pointed out in the First Series of these *Studies* (p. 259), that it comes direct from Cicero, and it is especially to be observed that there is nothing of the sort in Aristotle, to whom Dante presently appeals for a distinction

¹ A threefold division defended by S. Thomas; *Summa* i. 2^{da} Q. 72, Art. 4.

of a totally different kind, viz. that between the sinners outside, and those within, the *basso Inferno*. The passage in Cicero occurs in the *De Officiis*, a work very often quoted by Dante. (See Index to *Studies*, I. p. 353.) It will be seen there that Book I of the *De Officiis* was especially familiar to him, and the Chapters xi to xiv most of all. Now in Chapter xiii we find the following passage, some of the very words of which are almost reproduced here by Dante:—
 ‘Quum autem duobus modis, id est, aut vi aut fraude, fiat iniuria; fraus quasi vulpeculae, vis leonis videtur: utrumque homine alienissimum, sed fraus odio digna maiore.’

Note the following especially:—

‘D’ ogni malizia ch’ odio in cielo acquista,
Iniuria è il fine, ed ogni fin cotale
 O con *forza* o con *frode* altrui contrista.
 Ma perchè frode è *del uom proprio male*,
 Più *spiace* a Dio.’ (ll. 22-26.)

And even the contrast of the lion and the fox, which is omitted here, is found in another passage of Dante, where he puts these words into the mouth of Guido da Montefeltro:—

‘I’ opere mie
 Non furon *leonine*, ma di *volpe*.’ (*Inf.* xxvii. 75.)

We unhesitatingly maintain then that Dante derived this first fundamental principle of his Classification of Sins from Cicero, and that it is applied by him to mark out the divisions and relations of those sins only that are punished in the *basso Inferno*. If he does not acknowledge directly the source of this distinction, as he does when he borrows one from Aristotle a little later, it is probably because the authority of Cicero would not carry any special weight on such a subject, whereas that of Aristotle was for Dante almost as final as a pronouncement of Scripture.

Next, let us see how Virgil deals with Dante’s further question as to the principle of distinction between these sins and those that have been included in the higher Circles on lighter conditions of punishment. Why (asks Dante) are

they not also included within the fiery City of Dis¹, if God is angered with them? And if He is not, why do they suffer as much as they do? (ll. 70-75). Virgil rather sharply reproaches Dante for asking such a question, and for having so completely forgotten the teaching of his Ethics², that all wrong-doing falls under three heads: (1) *Incontinenza* (ἀκρασία) or Incontinence, of course in the original and wider sense of the word³, i. e. sins due to impulse and want of self-control, not deliberately chosen; (2) *Malizia* (κακία) or 'malicious wickedness' as it is called in the Psalms, i. e. sins of settled habit; (3) *Bestialità* (θηριότης) or Brutishness; and further, that the same authority teaches us, in reference to this distinction, that Incontinence is less hateful to God, and worthy of less severe blame. Finally, adds Virgil, if you pay due regard to this *dictum*, and also consider who those sinners were that were thus comparatively lightly visited, the whole matter will be clear to you. It surely results quite manifestly that Dante follows Aristotle in the broad distinction between sins of impulse and sins of habit, placing the former outside the burning City of Dis (l. 73), and the latter not only inside its walls, but also in a still lower depth within the pit of the *basso Inferno* (l. 16), and that, as regards the latter, he borrows from Cicero the distinction between such sins when carried out by violence, and when effected by fraud, and hence obtains the further divisions that are worked out in the three Circles of the actual pit of Hell.

Now I venture to maintain very confidently that two conclusions follow from this:—

1. That Dante *did not intend* to follow in the *Inferno* the Classification of the Seven Deadly Sins which he adopts in the *Purgatorio*.

¹ It will be observed that Circle VI (Heretics) is *within* the walls of the city, so that Dante's question relates only to the distinction between Circles II to V, which are 'outside the walls,' and Circles VII to IX, which are in the *basso Inferno*, the classification of which Virgil has just explained. Thus the sinners of Circle VI fall outside both of the groups compared. On this see *infra*, p. 179.

² 'la tua Etica.' See *Nic. Eth.* VII. 1.

³ The inconvenient modern restriction of this term is much to be regretted, as also that which has befallen several like terms, such as Temperance, Passion, Appetite, Immorality, and many more.

2. That he *did not intend* to follow Aristotle's classification *as a whole*, but, most clearly, appeals to it solely to justify a particular distinction which, he professes, had not at first sight seemed clear to him, making afterwards no further use of it.

One or two remarks on each of these conclusions. As to the first. There seem to be perfectly good reasons why Dante should deliberately adopt a different principle of classification in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*. In the case of Purgatory, the Church, or at least many of her greatest writers and doctors, had already pronounced upon the mutual relations and the principal types of sin, no doubt for practical reasons which readily suggest themselves in connexion with Penance, Indulgences, and Pardons. Dante could scarcely do otherwise than follow this guidance when himself treating of Purgatory. But in the case of Hell the Church had made no such pronouncement. All the penalties there being alike endless, and beyond remedy or mitigation, where there was no hope,

‘Non che di posa, ma di minor pena,’

there was no purpose in her doing so. In that case Dante had, so to speak, ‘a free hand,’ and he was at liberty to adopt any system, or to follow any lead, that might seem good to him. He could there give free expression to his own feelings or opinions in reference to different sins, and this would naturally bear the stamp of his own personal experience of life, and the bent of his own moral character. Of this I hope to say more in a subsequent Essay.

As to the second point. It is important to insist on the special and limited purpose for which Aristotle is here cited by Dante, because it has often been overlooked, and commentators, both ancient and modern, have vexed their souls in the search for *θηριότης* in Dante's system of classification. Some have gone to the length of absurdity of supposing it to refer to the Circle of the heretics, on the strength of an expression once used in the *Convito*¹. Imagine Dante's

¹ *Conv.* II. ix. 55-58.

applying such a term to such 'spiriti magni' as Farinata degli Uberti, Frederic. II¹, and 'il Cardinale'; to say nothing of the absurdity of supposing Dante to have borrowed this threefold classification from Aristotle, and then to have deliberately distorted it by setting *θηριότης* *above* *κακία* instead of *below* it². If it were worth while pursuing this error further, we might observe that there is no room for *θηριότης* *below* *κακία* in Dante's system, since the enumeration of the different forms of fraudulent 'malizia,' or *κακία*, carry us down to the very bottom of the pit (see ll. 64-66), and Dante in the following sentence acknowledges that the description is entirely complete. And observe, finally, that the *genus* to which the Ciceronian distinction with all its subdivisions is applied is *itself*

¹ In the *De Vulg. Eloq.* I. xii, Dante specially describes Frederic II and Manfred as '*brutalia* dedignantes,' besides applying to them many other terms of praise.

² Again, a single phrase of Aristotle is relied on, torn from its context, viz. that he says that *θηριότης* is *ἐλαττον κακίας* (*Nic. Eth.* VII. vii. 7). True, but why? '*οὐ γὰρ διέφθαρται τὸ βέλτιον ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔχει.*' So that we see that he is here speaking of *θηριότης* in its literal sense, and not in reference to human nature at all. Pietro di Dante seems to be thinking of this when he comments thus (p. 138):—'*Ex hoc auctor locum talibus bestialibus non distinxit nisi per Minotaurum.*' Boccaccio, *Comento* ii. pp. 314, 315, discusses at some length the Minotaur as representing 'bestialità.' The following among many other passages would show the absurdity of the distortion suggested in the text. In VII. i. 1 we find that *θηριότης* : *κακία* : : *ἡ ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς ἀρετή* : *ἀρετή* : that it is *ἑτερόν τι γένος κακίας* and clearly a worse 'γένος' (§ 2) : *τοὺς δὲ κακίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοὺς ὑπερβαλλόντας οὕτως ἐπιδυσφημοῦμεν* : § 3). The view here censured is maintained in some sense by Boccaccio, *Comento* (ii. pp. 211, 212), though he has to strain the meaning of the word by giving it a different sense from that of Aristotle, viz. 'obstinacy,' such as heretics display, and he is also obliged from the *position* assigned to the Heretics to admit that it is used in a worse and more Aristotelian sense also in reference to some of the lower divisions. This however seems to be illustrated mostly from Circle VII (1st *girone*) than from any sins *below* Malizia, as Brutishness *ex hypothesi* should be. See esp. p. 314, where he says 'entra nel settimo cerchio dove la matra bestialità è punita,' and further pp. 315, 316. It is surprising to find this latter view adopted also by Philalethes and Blanc. Philalethes, on *Inf.* xi. 83, quite explicitly declares, on the strength of *Eth.* VII. vii. 7, quoted above, that Bestialità ('viehische Sinn') is punished as '*ἐλαττον κακόν*' in Circle VII, and Malizia ('Bosheit') in Circles VIII and IX. Similarly Blanc, relying on the same (as I think) misunderstood passage in Aristotle (*Versuch*, &c., p. 106). I have ventured to call this interpretation 'surprising' because Dante has expressly included Circle VII under Malizia. See xi. 22 *seqq.*

'malizia' (see l. 22), which is the middle term in Aristotle's classification¹.

Hence this clearly results as the skeleton outline of Dante's system in the *Inferno*:—

$$\text{Sins of } \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{incontinenza} \\ \text{malizia} \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{per violenza} \\ \text{per frode.} \end{array} \right.$$

All the subdivisions range themselves easily and naturally under these heads, with the exception of 'Heresy,' as to which we shall say something later; but we may observe of it at once that it equally refuses to adapt itself to the system of the Seven Deadly Sins adopted in the *Purgatorio*, supposing that to have been in Dante's mind here.

No difficulty would probably have occurred to any one as to the different *principles* of the two classifications in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* respectively, had it not been for the striking similarity in the *results*, up to a certain point, and the no less striking divergence after that point. This may be seen at a glance as follows:—

	<i>Inferno.</i>	<i>Purgatorio.</i>
	Lust	Lust
	Gluttony	Gluttony
<i>Avarice</i>	Anger	Avarice
	Accidia (as some say, but ?)	Accidia
	Avarice	Anger
	Heresy	Envy
	Violence	Pride.
	Fraud without Treachery	
	Fraud with Treachery.	

The problem may be stated thus:—

(a) If (as many suppose) the two systems of Classification are meant to be the *same* (viz. the Seven Deadly Sins), why is there so much *divergence* in the results?

¹ Compare Paur, *Sündensystem*, p. 117: 'Ich bin überzeugt, nach der Intention des Dichters ist die Eintheilung mit der *incontinenza* und der *malizia* und ihren Unterabtheilungen für erschöpft zu erachten: die *matta bestialitate* schliesst sich dann noch jenen beiden an, der Aristotelischen Dreitheilung zu Liebe, ohne dass sie etwas Besonderes für sich bezeichnen soll.'

(β) If they are (as we maintain) *different*, why is there so much *similarity*?

Let us take these points in order.

As to question (α):—

I. Several writers would cut the knot by boldly maintaining that Pride, Envy, and 'Accidia' are all found in the *Inferno*, though the places assigned to them are strangely different.

(a) Some discover *Envy* at vii. 123, i.e. the *tristi* immersed in the 'belletta negra' at the bottom of the Stygian marsh; and *Pride* at viii. 46, where Filippo Argenti is described as being 'al mondo persona *orgogliosa*'.¹ This theory seems to make no provision for 'Accidia.' Some of its advocates, however, suppose it to be united in its punishment with Anger on the same principle as Avarice and Prodigality are united. But, if so, this implies a different sense for 'Accidia' from that in the *Purgatorio*.

(b) Others consider the 'tristi' just mentioned to represent 'Accidia,' and it is to be observed that the word 'accidioso' does occur in connexion with them (l. 123).² Then they find *Envy* embodied in the 'fangose genti' who set upon Filippo Argenti in viii. 59, he being himself (as before) the example of *Pride*.

(c) Another variety³ is to suppose *Pride* to be represented by Capaneus in xiv. 64, 65, when in fact his 'superbia' is denounced.

(d) Another well-known writer, Balbo (*Vita di Dante*, p. 308 n.), considers the sixth Circle, that of the Heretics, to represent Pride, chiefly on the slender ground of the use of the word 'oltracotanza' in ix. 91-93. But it is evident that this is not addressed to the Heretics at all, but to the 'Demon duri' who bar the entrance to the city of Dis.

¹ It should be observed however that *superbia* and *orgoglio* are very different. The latter is more like the Greek *θυμός*, or Impetuosity, and implies some arrogance and violence in action. See Dante's use of *orgoglio* (*passim*), even in the quasi-playful sense in which it is attributed to doves in *Purg.* ii. 126. See the passages in Fay's *Concordance*, s.v.

² See this further discussed *infra*, p. 174.

³ Maintained by Guelfi in his monograph, *I Superbi*, &c., pp. 14 *seqq.*

The following are obvious objections :

(i) These theories at most can only show a cursory treatment, consisting in passing and barely recognizable allusions, of a few lines each, for the two Sins which have most evil prominence in the *Purgatorio*, where they occupy several Cantos.

(ii) We have in (a) and (b) three, or even four, of the Deadly Sins¹, including the gravest of them, compressed into one Circle (Circle V), whereas the first three (Lust, Gluttony, Avarice) have a separate Circle assigned to each.

(iii) If Pride is the worst of all sins (see Dante in *Purgatorio* and S. Thomas Aquinas, *passim*), how is it that it falls according to (a) and (b) among the lighter sins of incontinence, 'Che men Dio offende e men biasimo accatta' (xi. 83, 84), or according to (d) in Circle VI and according to (c) in Circle VII? Thus in every case it would be a long way removed from the worst types of sin.

(iv) We lose the careful selection to which we are accustomed everywhere in Dante of different punishments appor- tioned on considerations of fitness for different sins.

(v) The further difficulty remains on the other hand, that in the *Purgatorio*, though it is supposed to be arranged on the same lines, more than half of the special sins treated in the *Inferno* are omitted altogether; and again, it is the sins of deepest dye, viz. those that are treated of in the last twenty-five Cantos of the *Inferno*, that are thus omitted.

(vi) In short, these attempts to remove a supposed anomaly either leave or create others of such magnitude that the divergencies between the two *Cantiche* remain quite as serious as they were before.

The next two theories endeavour to produce the required reconciliation on rather different lines.

(e) Another recent writer, Scherillo², maintains that Pride

¹ i.e. Pride, Envy, Anger, and sometimes Accidia. This view is actually maintained by Pietro di Dante, p. 113, and in a fourteenth-century MS. in the Laurentian Library there is a plan of the *Inferno* which is reproduced in Lord Vernon's magnificent work (vol. iii. p. 57), in which the Deadly Sins in question are all placed in Circle V of the *Inferno*.

² *Alcuni Capitoli*, pp. 420 seqq.

and Envy are punished in the ninth Circle, and are represented by Lucifer and the Giants respectively.

But (1) this seems mainly to depend, not on suitable evidence, but on a mere *a priori* expectation—based, as we maintain, on a pure misconception of Dante's plan—that Pride and Envy *ought* to be found in such a position. And (2) it leaves wholly unexplained the relation of about twenty Cantos (xi-xxx) to the classification to which they are supposed to conform.

(f) A more elaborate attempt of the same kind has been made by Mr. W. T. Harris in his often very suggestive work on the *Spiritual Sense of the Divina Commedia*. He lays it down first that the whole Seven Sins are punished in the Inferno, some *eo nomine*, and the rest by their 'daughters,' i. e. their results, this metaphor being borrowed from S. Thomas Aquinas.

Thus Heresy¹ is treated as a 'daughter' of Accidia, at any rate in the form of materialism which Dante makes prominent (see x. 15). Again Despair², leading to Suicide, is regarded as another of the daughters of Accidia; and thus the second division of the seventh Circle is also brought under Accidia. Possibly *some* parts of the three sub-divisions of the third, Blasphemy, Sodomy, Usury, might conceivably be reduced to the same head. But the first division, i. e. Violence against one's neighbour (Tyrants, &c.), seems to have no possible connexion with it. Next, the various forms of Fraud in the ten pits of Malebolge are summarily disposed of as the ten daughters of Envy; and, in the ninth Circle, the four types of Treachery, in like manner, as the daughters of Pride. All this is bold and ingenious, but there is surely no special connexion between *Envy* and the several species of Fraud, or between *Pride* and the four types of Treachery, though sometimes these and indeed any other kinds of sin may arise from such roots.

II. Dr. Witte adopts an entirely different line in meeting the difficulty raised in (a), p. 162. He denies that Pride, Envy, or even Accidia have any distinct place in the *Inferno*. That they have not, is traced to the different nature and

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

² Despair happens to be mentioned by S. Thomas (*Summa*, ii. 2^{do} Q. 35, Art. 4) as one of the six 'daughters' of Accidia, but the other five have no relation at all to any of the sins of Circles VI or VII.

purpose of punishment in Hell and in Purgatory, viz. to its being in the former penal, and in the latter remedial. Consequently he says that *actions* only are punished in Hell, whereas in Purgatory *motives* also are taken into account, since even the first 'motions of Sin' must be eradicated before the soul can 'appear in the presence of God.' The punishment of Hell has no such purpose or even tendency, and the sinful character is rather intensified by it, and becomes more defiant. This Dante represents in such cases as Capaneus (xiv. 51 *seqq.*) and Vanni Fucci (xxv. 3). The specific *outward acts* alone are dealt with, and for these the sinner is (as Milton says of Satan)

'punished in the shape he sinned,
According to his doom.'

In illustration of this, Witte points out that Capaneus is punished, not for Pride, but for blasphemy; Cain, not for Envy or Anger, but for murder; Satan himself, not for Pride, but for treachery. Conversely (he observes) in Purgatory it is the motive rather than the act which is considered, e. g. the Pride, not the tyranny, of the Counts of Santafore, in xi. 58; the Envy, not the blasphemy, of Sapia, in xiii. 122. Hence Witte concludes that Pride, Envy, and Accidia, as such, and apart from their outward acts which may be very various, have no place of separate punishment in Hell, and therefore that the parallel between Hell and Purgatory holds good, and was only intended to hold good, just so far as sins of act are dealt with in both. Sins of motive or tendency not carried out into act and yet unrepented of would, according to Witte's view, be most appropriately punished in the Ante-Inferno among the

'anime triste di coloro
Che visser senza infamia e senza lodo.'

There doubtless he would place the Duke Ferdinand and the Riccardi Bride of Browning's poem of *The Statue and the Bust*, in contrast with the position of Francesca and Paolo in the second Circle of the *Inferno* itself.

Other writers, e. g. Todeschini and Benivieni, maintain the same view. The latter, for instance, remarks of Pride and

Envy :—‘ These two vices are deeply hidden, and difficult to detect because they are rooted in the inmost recesses of the heart ; hence when . . . they burst forth and come to light, they clothe themselves almost always, according to the nature of their actions, with some other name, the name of some definite sin or crime, and for *that* they are punished ’ (quoted by Todeschini, *Scritti su Dante*, i. p. 45)¹. Also Todeschini gives his own opinion to the same effect, viz. that in the *Inferno* Dante treats ‘ non già de’ principii moventi a peccare, ma degli *effettivi peccati* ’ (*ib.* pp. 42–45). Bartoli² objects to this explanation of Witte, &c., that, however various may be the *effects* of Pride and Envy, they are perfectly distinct sins *in themselves*, and sins of a very heinous kind, and therefore quite as deserving of punishment as other and less grievous sins. Still, if we felt ourselves under the necessity of justifying the divergences of classification in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* at all, and of reducing them to some initial common design, this attempt is not open to the glaring and palpable objections existing against the theories previously dealt with.

Turning now to (β) on p. 163, it is obvious at once that this difficulty is much less serious than the one just considered. That considerable similarity might sometimes result from different principles of classification is much more intelligible

¹ There is a curious note of the early commentator Benvenuto da Imola on *Purg.* xiii. 20, in which he seems to point to a solution something like those just explained in the text. He raises the question (‘quaestio difficillima’) why Pride and Envy are treated at such length by Dante in the *Purgatorio*, ‘et in *Inferno* videtur omnino praeteriisse.’ His solution is that they *are* punished in the *Inferno*, ‘sed implicite et occulte. . . In *Purgatorio* vero de his tractat explicite et aperte. . . Homo enim positus in *Inferno*, idest in statu vitiorum, non cognoscit nec discernit peccata, nisi in communi et in confuso. . . Sed positus in *Purgatorio*, idest in statu poenitentiae, discernit et ruminat omnia, tam principalia quam accessoria, et de singulis dolet et poenitentiam agit : sicut etiam potes videre quod in *Inferno* sub involucri tractavit in uno capitulo de avaritia, prodigalitate, iracundia et accidia in generali et compendiose. . . In *Purgatorio* vero tractat de singulis distincte, diffuse.’ He then proceeds to discuss a question which seems no less difficult, viz. the omission in the *Purgatorio* of the long list of sins in Circles VII, VIII, and IX of the *Inferno*. His solution of this is that most of those who reach Purgatory at all have sinned through impulse or ‘Incontinence.’ ‘Sed illi qui peccant per *malitiam* raro veniunt ad purgatorium in vita vel morte.’ (iii. pp. 352–4.)

² *Lett. Ital.* vi. part i, p. 73.

than that glaring differences should arise in the application of the same principle.

(i) To a certain point, such similarity is even to be expected, if the different systems are based upon any natural or rational principle. At the same time it may be admitted that the coincidences in the case before us seem perhaps too marked to be entirely accounted for thus, though (see *inf.* p. 173) they are less exact than seems to be generally assumed.

(ii) It carries us a good deal further if we observe that, while Dante starts professedly with the principle that sins due to impulse (*incontinenza*, or ἀκρασία) are the least grave, he has no further avowed principle to guide him as to the order of the sins falling *within that class*. He would therefore surely be most likely to arrange them in an order already familiar to him, so far as it was applicable.

(iii) We may perhaps advance another step, though it carries us into the regions of conjecture and hypothesis. It does not seem to me impossible to suppose that Dante may have actually *begun* the *Inferno* with an idea of following the classification of the Seven Deadly Sins, but, finding it after a certain point unsuitable, he may have adopted a different method, and then have invented the *ex post facto* explanation of Canto xi, as an ingenious way of covering the change of plan, and giving a factitious appearance of unity of design to the composite work.

This is thrown out as a mere possible hypothesis, and must be taken for what it is worth. Its acceptance is not in the least essential to the theory of classification above maintained, but it may, if supported by independent considerations, throw some light upon it. It seems at any rate clear that, if Dante had started with the conception of a poem on the present scale, and also with the idea of constructing it on the basis of the Seven Deadly Sins, he would not have disposed of four or, as some say, five of them in the first eight Cantos, leaving nothing but the other two (or perhaps three) for the remaining twenty-six. If therefore this classification ever formed part of his plan, his idea of the scope and bulk and

method of the poem must have undergone an important change. Now it has from very early times been supposed that there is a mark of discontinuity between Cantos vii and viii, and this is entirely independent of any notion of using the fact for the support of this or any other theory. The story is found in Boccaccio, and there seems no conceivable reason for its invention, beyond the very faint suggestion of the occurrence of such a break implied by the opening words of Canto viii: 'Io dico seguitando.' This is indeed a slender ground on which to build a story of such circumstantiality of detail as that narrated by Boccaccio both in the *Vita* and also in his *Comento*¹. Boccaccio professes to have heard it from a nephew of Dante, Andrea Poggi, who was also an intimate friend of his own, as well as from another Florentine named Dino Perini. The names of two or three other persons besides are mentioned in connexion with it. It is extremely unlikely that Boccaccio invented all this, since he immediately proceeds to state a difficulty from internal evidence, which he says he himself has never been able satisfactorily to get over². I confess I am not one of those who think that because an event is said to have happened (even by Boccaccio³), that is a *prima facie* reason for doubting or disbelieving it. It is so very simple for those who have this habit to throw over an early authority, because it is too far removed from our own time to be verifiable; and a later one because it is too far removed from the time of the alleged event to be reliable. Nor do I think it reasonable to argue that, because Boccaccio is best known by his brilliant works of fiction, therefore everything he wrote,

¹ See *Dante and his Biographers*, pp. 30, 31; 52 *seqq.*

² It is not, however, difficult to suggest more than one adequate solution, since it affects a mere point of detail, viz. the prophecy of Ciaccio in *Inf.* vi. 67, referring to an event in 1304, after Dante's exile.

³ Boccaccio frequently gives us the actual sources of his information due to his own personal inquiries, which seem often to have been very carefully made, e.g. Pier Giardino of Ravenna (*Com.* i. p. 104, and *Vita* c. xiv); Andrea Poggi, Dante's nephew (*Com.* ii. p. 129); Dino Perini (*ib.* p. 131, and *Vita*, c. xiv); a near relation of Beatrice Portinari (*Com.* i. p. 224); the Abbot of the Monastery of San Benedetto (*ib.* ii. p. 451); his authority for his statements about Gualdrada (*ib.* ii. p. 434, on *Inf.* xvi. 37), and so on.

even when it professes to be history or biography, must also be fiction. Nor is this *a priori* conception of him borne out by facts, since there are many striking instances in which his statements have been proved accurate by recently discovered documentary evidence¹. But to return to the story. Its main features are that, owing to political troubles, the composition of the poem was interrupted at the end of Canto vii, and that the MS. was then put aside, and remained for a considerable time forgotten or indeed lost. It was then accidentally discovered, and pressure was put upon Dante to continue it, which he did without any indication of a break, unless it be in the words '*Io dico seguitando*' above quoted. They are surely, as I have said, hardly enough marked to have *generated* so precise a story, whether it be in itself true or false, especially as there is such an obvious explanation of them in the close connexion of the subject of the two Cantos. Note the repetition of *torre* in vii. 130 and viii. 2.

Next it is natural to ask whether any further internal evidence can be detected in support of the theory of a 'fault' of this kind having occurred in the composition of the poem. The ingenuity of critics, and specially, I think, of Professor Minich², professes to have found one or two such traces.

(a) In the first seven Cantos, none of the sinners met with, who are mentioned by name, are of any note, except in Limbo, which is in a sense hardly within the Inferno proper, since it is not a 'place of torment' (see Canto iv, *passim*). In the fourth Circle there are indeed Popes and Cardinals, but Dante does not name one of them, alleging that they were unrecognizable (see *Inf.* vii. 47, 53, 54). He seems, in fact, to avoid mentioning great names in contemporary or recent history, limiting himself either to those unknown to fame, such as Ciacco³, and Paolo and Francesca (who owe their immortality to Dante himself),

¹ *Inter alia*, Guerrini e Ricci, pp. 23-25; 38, 39; 52 *seqq.*

² See here Bartoli, *Lett. Ital.* VI, part i, cap. ii; Minich, *Sintesi*, &c., pp. 54, 55, &c.

³ Surprise has sometimes been expressed that Dante should have put into the mouth of such a 'hog' (see l. 52) as Ciacco the important and striking prophecies of Canto vi.

or else to those of distant date, as though he had resolved, like Juvenal,

‘Experiar quid concedatur in illos
Quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis atque Latina.’

But after Canto viii, and notably in Circles VI and VII, we have well-known public characters of recent date, and of highest rank, such as Farinata degli Uberti, the Cardinal degli Ubaldini, Frederic II, Azzolino, Obizzo, &c., and so very commonly afterwards. This change of practice, it is thought, may perhaps correspond with some change of plan, or break in the period of composition.

(b) In *Inf.* x. 100 there occurs a passage that has given rise to much dispute. Dante here puts into the mouth of Farinata the singular statement that ‘they’ foresee events that are far off, but that they have no knowledge of those that are present or near at hand¹. Among various questions that we need not here discuss, it is difficult to determine whether ‘they’ refers to the dead generally², or only to those in Circle VI (Heretics) specially. If it be the latter, the point has no bearing on our present argument. But if the former, although in the *later* Cantos very numerous instances occur of prophecies of future events communicated to Dante by the spirits with whom he meets, there does not appear to be an instance of their displaying any definite knowledge of *present* events, that would be inconsistent with this *dictum*³.

¹ The following passages from the *Summa* may be quoted. In i. Q. 86, Art. 4, we read that disembodied spirits may see some things future (‘*aliqua futura*’) not ‘*vi naturae*,’ but by influence of God, Angels, or even Demons. (Cf. Q. 57.) Again in Q. 89, Art. 8, that ‘*secundum naturalem cognitionem . . . animae mortuorum nesciunt quae hic aguntur*’ ‘*ea quae apud nos aguntur ignorant*.’

Thus, while S. Thomas does not seem to draw the distinction here made by Dante between distantly future and actually present events, yet some isolated expressions in the passages above quoted might, if united, give some colour to it.

² This question is discussed in an interesting monograph by Arezio, *Sulla Teoria Dantesca della Prescienza*, Palermo, 1896.

³ The prophecy of Vanni Fucci (*Inf.* xxiv. 142 *seqq.*) refers to events about eighteen months in the future, and that of Camición de’ Pazzi (in *Inf.* xxxii. 69) to an event about two years future. One prophecy of Ciacco (vi. 67 *seqq.*) involves a period of about three years, that of Farinata himself about four (x. 79), that of Mahomet (xxviii. 55 *seqq.*) about seven, and that of Pier da

It is remarkable that in reference to the *present* state of Romagna¹ Guido da Montefeltro is quite ignorant, and asks and receives information from Dante (see *Inf.* xxvii. 25), and this exactly exemplifies the statement in *Inf.* x. 104:—

‘s’ altri non ci apporta,
Nulla sapem di vostro stato umano.’

But in one of the *earlier* Cantos (viz. the sixth) there seems to be one very startling exception. There Ciacco is fully aware of the present state of Florence—

‘ch’ è piena
D’ invidia sì che già trabocca il sacco’ (l. 50);

and, more definitely than this, he declares in answer to a precise question of Dante’s (l. 62) that there are now only two righteous men within the city—

‘Giusti son due, ma non vi sono intesi’ (l. 73).

He also has knowledge of events not only ‘che son,’ but also ‘che s’ appressano,’ for he is made to foretell (in ll. 64–66) the first shedding of blood in the faction fights of Florence, which took place at the beginning of May 1300, i.e. at an interval of only a few weeks from the assumed date. Now unless good reason can be shown for restricting ‘Noi’ in x. 100 to the denizens of Circle VI², there would be an inconsistency here almost unparalleled in such a precise and careful writer as Dante, and one which would certainly be much more intelligible if such a break as we are supposing took place in the composition.

(c) There is another anomaly which I have not seen noticed, but which seems to me to call for some explanation. It has always appeared to me strange that Avarice and Prodigality (especially the former) should be classed among

Medicina (xxviii. 76 *seqq.*) twelve years (but according to another explanation, five). I do not attach any importance to the vague use here and there of the present tense in such passages as x. 83, xix. 87 (cited by Arezio, *op. cit.*), as involving any exception to the statement in *Inf.* x. 103, 104.

¹ In *Purg.* xiv. 73 *seqq.*, on the other hand, Guido del Duca in Purgatory exhibits a minute knowledge of the contemporary condition of Romagna.

² Arezio, *op. cit.*, p. 20, comes emphatically to the conclusion that ‘Noi’ includes ‘tutti i dannati dell’ Inferno.’

sins of Impulse, as distinguished from those of Habit. That Lust, Gluttony, and Anger should find a place there, seems reasonable enough. But surely 'Avarice' is strangely out of place in that category. Supposing, however, the classification in Canto xi to be an afterthought, and the treatment of sins on the original method to have included Avarice, this slight anomaly might have been overlooked.

But in concluding this part of our subject I must maintain that the amount of similarity supposed to exist between the systems of the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* has been a good deal exaggerated. Turning back to the list on p. 162, it is to be noted that whereas the order in Purgatory is distinctly Lust, Gluttony, ^{Avarice} Avarice, Accidia, Anger; in the *Inferno* it is Lust, Gluttony, Anger, [Accidia ?] ^{Avarice} Avarice. So that the correspondence is at best very imperfect, to say nothing of the very great doubt as to Accidia being there at all. This is the next point in dispute to which we now pass on.

In inquiring whether Accidia finds any place in the *Inferno* or no, and, if so, where, we are embarking on the most hotly disputed question of all, and one on which I regret that my own conclusion differs from that of several friends and fellow-students for whose judgement I have a very high regard.

Dr. Witte maintains that it is *not* found, partly inasmuch as it also (like Pride and Envy) is rather an inward feeling than an outward act; and that, so far as it *is* outward, it is manifested rather in the *absence* of action than in any definite word or deed; and partly because, if not before death repented of, its appropriate place would be found in the *Ante-Inferno* among those who

'non furon ribelli
Nè fur fedeli a Dio, ma per sè foro.' (iii. 38, 39.)

Those, however, who set themselves to work out at all costs in the *Inferno* the programme adopted by the poet in the *Purgatorio* generally profess to find this sin represented by the sullen sinners in the Stygian slime of the seventh Canto and fifth Circle of the *Inferno*—those who are described as 'tristi . . . Portando dentro accidioso fummo' (vii. 121-3). Two points at once present themselves in favour of this view.

(1) The employment of the actual word 'accidioso.' It is singular to note—though whether it strengthens or weakens the present argument is not so clear—that the actual word *accidia* itself occurs only once in the *Purgatorio*, viz. at xviii. 132, and it is not found even in *Purg.* xvii, where the nature of the sin is analyzed and explained. (2) That these sinners are described as *tristi*, for we must remember that *Tristitia* is quite a common alternative term with *Accidia* in Church writers to describe this sin. See *infra*, pp. 184, 185.

But on the other hand, these objections must be considered:—

(1) It involves somewhat of a fallacy 'figurae dictionis' to infer that a disposition to which the adjective *accidioso* might fitly apply must therefore itself be rightly described as *accidia*. And in actual fact the condition here spoken of has little in common with *accidia*, or spiritual sloth and indifference, in the technical sense in which it is ranked as one of the Seven Deadly Sins, and in which it is understood in the *Purgatorio*. Even therefore if it were designated by the substantive *accidia*, we should have secured a verbal rather than a real coincidence with the *Purgatorio*.

(2) Not only this, but we should not even have secured correspondence in the order of treatment of *Accidia* with that of the *Purgatorio*. For *there* *Accidia* is *above* Anger, *here* it would be *below* it; ~~also, *there* *Accidia* is *below* Avarice, and *here* it would be *above* it.~~ Now as an alteration of order would involve a contrary view of the relative gravity of this and other vices, it involves a serious question of *principle*.

(3) Assuming this vice to be 'Accidia' as distinct from 'Anger,' we should have the unique anomaly of two quite distinct sins being included in one Circle, and visited by the same punishment.

(4) On the other hand, those who maintain that Anger and *Accidia* are related as excess and defect in the Aristotelian sense, and are therefore punished together here, overlook the fact that such a supposed relation of these two Deadly Sins is quite inconsistent with Dante's treatment of them in the *Purgatorio*.

(5) The condition of mind metaphorically described as

'accidioso fummo'¹ is precisely the counterpart of the literal punishment of those who are expiating the Sin of *Anger* (not *Accidia*) in Purgatory: see *Purg.* xv. 142-5; xvi. 1-7. A significant correspondence, which recalls the passage in *Wisdom* xvii. 21: 'Over them was spread a heavy night, an image of that darkness which should afterwards receive them, yet were they unto themselves more grievous than the darkness.'

(6) *Accidia* in the proper sense would surely be very strangely grouped as a sin of impulse (*incontinentia*) rather than of habit; whereas Anger in any of its forms, sullen as well as violent, might be appropriately so classed. *Accidia* is rather due to the absence of self-stimulus, or self-exertion, than to the want of self-control, or self-restraint.

Now it seems to me that we shall avoid all these objections, and also give a far more natural interpretation to the language of Dante, if we suppose the 'tristi' in this passage to represent a type or species of anger, viz. sullen, suppressed, or sulky anger; a gloomy, resentful, discontented disposition, refusing to rejoice in the bright sunshine, and other occasions of happiness and contentment in this upper world; a disposition to which the epithet *accidioso* would fitly apply, though not the more technically restricted term *accidia*. We are confirmed in this sub-division of Anger by the recollection of the treatment of this vice by Aristotle in *Nic. Eth.* IV. v, where the *πικροί* are distinguished from the *ὀργίλοι* and other types of violent or impetuous anger. What is more natural than that Dante should follow Aristotle in this distinction? If so, it is also natural that the two types should be punished in the same Circle of Hell; and, further, that they should share in the same punishment, with the significant and appropriate difference that the sullen are submerged in the slime, while the violent (who are also described as 'muddy folk,' 'fangose genti') are tearing one another on the surface of the Stygian pool. Also the order now becomes appropriate, for clearly Aristotle regarded *πικρότης* as worse than *ὀργιλότης*, and this would be generally admitted.

¹ Comp. Virg. *Aen.* v. 682-3, 'Stuppa vomens tardum fumum, lentusque carinas Est vapor.'

A slight modification of this view is that the sinners in question are not the *πικροί* of Aristotle, but rather the *ἀόργητοι*¹. See *Nic. Eth.* II. vii. 10, and Dante's reproduction of the passage in *Conv.* IV. xvii. 51, where he describes the defect as 'troppa pazienza contra li nostri mali esteriori.' Thus the exact Excess and Defect would be punished together, as in the case of Prodigality and Avarice. See *Purg.* xxii. 49-51:—

'E sappi che la colpa, che rimbecca
Per dritta opposizione alcun peccato,
Con esso insieme qui suo verde secca.'

One or other of these views is held by Witte, Paur, Todeschini, Philalethes, Scherillo and others².

Also, since writing the above some time ago, I am glad to find that Bartoli³ is entirely of the same opinion as that which I have here maintained. See especially his emphatic conclusion, p. 70: 'Dunque nè *accidiosi*, nè *superbi*, nè *invidiosi*, per me, nello Stige, ma soli *iracondi*.'

Something must next be said on Dante's treatment of the sin of Heresy, or rather Misbelief or Unbelief, and on its position in the classification of sins. In the *Purgatorio*, it is not referred to at all. In the *Inferno*, so far as it is *directly* dealt with, i. e. not as the cause of schism or division, but on its intellectual side, it occupies the sixth Circle. We are not surprised that it does not appear in Purgatory, because *ex hypothesi* such sinners voluntarily reject the teaching of the Church, and cut themselves off from her communion and ministrations. They commit a sort of spiritual suicide, and for such there could be no hope, certainly from the point of view

¹ So Scherillo, *Alcuni Capitoli*, pp. 409, 410.

² Boccaccio in his *Comento* gives a curiously 'uncertain sound,' for (1) while he distinctly describes the Sin here punished as 'accidia' he justifies its collocation with anger by referring to Aristotle's distinction of *πικροί* as opposed to *ὀργίλοι* or *ἀκρόχολοι* (ii. p. 120: comp. pp. 114, 115). (2) He next treats it as the defect in reference to *ὀργή*, as in *Ar. Eth.* IV. v. 5, i. e. *ἀοργησία*, quite a different thing (p. 124), and so related to Anger much as Avarice is to Prodigality in the last Circle. (3) Finally, he ends with a kind of homily against the Vice, in which the word is extended to the full meaning of *Accidia* in its theological sense, as it is treated in the *Purgatorio* (pp. 126-7).

³ *Lett. Ital.* vi. pp. 58, 70.

of a mediaeval Churchman¹. Yet that makes it all the more a matter of course that their place should be found in Hell. But before we speak further of this, let us first be quite clear as to the precise form of sin which Dante has in view, for both from his own language and also from the typical representatives of this class of sinners given in Canto x, it seems to result that the terms 'heretic' or 'heresiarch,' as we commonly employ them, would be very misleading.

(1) Now though it is true that Dante speaks of 'heresiarchs' 'co'lor seguaci d'ogni setta,' it is clear that one type of error is prominently, if not exclusively, in his mind, viz. the Epicurean lovers of heathen or Christian times—

'Che l' anima col corpo morta fanno.'

The prominent names which he introduces, such as Farinata, Frederic II, and 'the Cardinal,' are all examples of this type of error, and, with the exception of Pope Anastasius, there are no 'heretics,' properly so called, mentioned here at all. Moreover, the form of punishment, which is in all cases selected by Dante for its special suitability to the sin to be punished, is clearly chosen here with reference to the denial of a future life, and its appropriateness is limited to this particular form of error or heresy. Those who disbelieve the immortality of the soul are by a just retribution entombed, soul as well as body, in massive sepulchres whose covers shall never again be raised after the Day of final Judgement to all eternity².

(2) Another point to notice is this. 'Heresiarchs,' in the strict sense, would be more appropriately punished

'tra le anime più nere,'

¹ S. Thomas gives another reason why Heresy is not among the Seven Deadly Sins. He lays stress upon the derivation of the word, which implies the *election* by a person as to what doctrines he will hold, or in what form (*Summa*, ii. 2^{da} Q. 11, Art. 1), and such presumption arises from *Pride*. 'Infidelitas, secundum quod est peccatum, oritur ex superbia ex qua contingit quod homo intellectum suum non vult subiicere regulis fidei,' &c. (*ib.* Q. 10, Art. 1).

² Compare with this the punishment of the Suicides. Those who have thus destroyed their own bodies will not have them restored to them like others, but these will be separately suspended upon the gnarled and thorny trunks in which their souls are imprisoned. See *Inf.* xiii. 103-108.

viz. as authors of schism and discord, with others of that class, in the ninth Bolgia of the eighth Circle of Hell. Such offenders have little indeed in common with the Epicurean statesmen or churchmen, who, immersed in the pursuit of the pleasures or ambitions of this world, give no thought to another, until at last they openly adapt their intellectual opinions to the desire of their hearts, and the practice of their lives. As Dante admirably says elsewhere—

‘poi l’ affetto lo intelletto lega.’ (*Par.* xiii. 120.)

It seems clear, therefore, that Dante is referring not so much to what we understand by ‘heresy’ as to open and professed Infidelity, and this particularly in its aspect of Materialism.

(3) That Dante should not have provided a special punishment in the *Inferno* for ‘heresy’ properly so called, or perverted opinions on religious truths *as such*, is not, I think, a matter for surprise, when we consider his point of view which has been already insisted upon. It was no part of his plan in the *Inferno* to deal with secret sins of the heart, but only with those which were developed in some outwardly vicious *action*. So long as men hold heretical views, ‘every man in the deep of his heart,’ they find no special place in the *Inferno* of Dante. But supposing that the heresy comes forth into act, or proclaims itself openly, then the case is different. This may occur in two principal ways:—

(a) A man may publicly teach his heresy, and seek ‘to draw away people after him.’ In that case he becomes an author or leader of schism, and he finds his place in the ninth Bolgia of the eighth Circle.

Or (β) he may openly and contumaciously deny the truth of the Christian religion, and repudiate the teaching of the Church without any attempt or desire to inculcate his own views upon others. We might describe the latter as a *destructive*, and the former as a *constructive* form of openly pronounced heresy. Though the former, or the constructive and active form, is more serious in its consequences, and deserves heavier punishment, yet the latter also is a grave danger and

a scandal, especially if it occurs in the case of 'men of light and leading' (as the phrase is); if a Pope, a Cardinal, an Emperor, or a Statesman,

'anime che son di fama note' (*Par.* xvii. 138),

be guilty of the offence.

Here, then, we have a sin of a tangible kind in outward act, and one sufficiently dangerous and conspicuous to call for special punishment—but where is this to be placed in the catalogue of sins? Naturally the systems of Aristotle and of Cicero provide no place for it. It is outside that of Cicero, because that only applies to the divisions of the Lower *Inferno*, comprising sins of Violence and Fraud. Dante says to Virgil in reference to these divisions:—

'La tua ragione . . . assai ben distingue
Questo baratro e il popol che il possiede.' (*Inf.* xi. 68, 69.)

It is outside that of Aristotle, because that only applies to the distinction between those that are *outside the City of Dis*,

'non dentro dalla città roggia' (l. 73)¹,

and those that are *within the Lower Inferno*. This is quite precisely defined in the words of Dante's question to Virgil. Now the Heretics are *not in the Upper Inferno*, which is bounded above and below by the Acheron and the Styx respectively. This latter stream flows round *outside* the walls of the city like a moat, and forms

'l' alte fosse
Che vullan quella terra sconsolata.' (*Inf.* viii. 76–81.)

But the Heretics are *within these walls*², as we are plainly

¹ As if to make this doubly clear, they are not only described as above, but also specifically enumerated in the *terzina* preceding, ll. 70–72.

² Boccaccio in his *Les.* 37 (*Comento*, ii. pp. 193, 202, 208, &c.) interprets the iron walls and barred gates separating the city of Dis and all the lower Circles of Hell from those above to indicate the *obstinacy* and persistency of the sinners included within them. The same is indicated by the resistance to Virgil (i.e. Reason), also by the presence of the Gorgon, Medusa, turning into stone all that looked upon her, and so making any return or any change impossible. Also in *Les.* 53 (ii. p. 373) he interprets *Inf.* xiv. 44 to mean that human reason

told in ix. 109 ('Com' io fui *dentro*, &c.). Yet they are *not in the Lower Inferno*, the descent to which begins in Canto xii (see also xi. 1 and 115). Dante has therefore imagined the sixth Circle to occupy an intermediate level plain within the city walls, and surrounding the mouth of the pit of the Lower Inferno. Being thus level, it forms a unique exception to the continually descending circles both of the Upper and Lower Inferno. From the latter it is separated by a steep descent or precipice, the roughness of which Dante compares to the 'Slavini di Marco' near Riva. Shut in then by such barriers on either side, physically as well as logically separated from all other sins or classes of sinners in the system of Dante's *Inferno*, lie the Heretics in their burning tombs, on a broad plain which is studded over with sepulchres like the great burying-places of Pola or of Arles.

The relative position assigned to these sinners in the descending scale may no doubt be taken to indicate in a general way the comparative degree of gravity which Dante personally would assign to the sin in question. It is worse than the sins of impulse and imperfect self-control punished in the first five Circles. But it is less grave than the sins of Violence in the seventh Circle. Yet as both it and they often imply an element of power and force, mental or bodily, and hence are not incompatible with a certain nobleness of character, there is not in Dante's treatment of them any contempt or scornful exultation, such as grows fiercer and stronger as he descends through the eighth and ninth Circles. It seems as if Dante would teach us that worse than the worst forms of intellectual error in things spiritual is every form of moral depravity or habitual vice (*malizia*). Men may be, and often are, better than their professions, but from the condemnation of their practices there is no appeal, for 'by their fruits ye shall know them.'

In conclusion, let us remember that this classification of sins is adopted for a poetical purpose, and it does not pretend to be scientific or exhaustive. It may be questioned whether

(Virgil) can overcome everything except obstinacy (*Demon duri*), which only the intervention of divine power can subdue.

the subject admits of this, and Dante has certainly not attempted any such hopeless task. But there are at any rate three obvious grounds of adverse criticism that may be anticipated.

First, it follows from the adoption of two such distinct principles as Dante has employed that a certain amount of cross-division is inevitable. The same sin, judged at least by its title, may *arise* from Incontinence, or Settled Habit, and it may be *effected* either by force or fraud. As Hood says:—

‘ Evil is wrought
By want of thought
As well as want of heart¹.’

Consequently we must expect to find the same sin, or the same sinners, reappearing in different parts of the *Inferno*. Thus we have the Lust arising from Incontinence in Circle II; that connected with Violence (in a special sense as explained by Dante, xi. 46–51) in the third Girone of Circle VII; and that associated with Fraud in the first Bolgia of Circle VIII. We have Avarice in Circle IV, in the third Girone of Circle VII, while it is closely connected with two or three of the forms of Sin punished in the Bolge of Circle VIII. Prodigality appears in Circle IV, and in the second Girone of Circle VII; Robbery and Plunder occur in the first Girone of Circle VII and in the seventh Bolgia of Circle VIII. These, and many other instances that might be added, are accounted for by the recognized employment of more than one principle of division.

Secondly, we have some curious anomalies in the collocation of sins, which are due to the recollection either of some text of Scripture, or (even more markedly) to some sentiment or *obiter dictum* of Aristotle, whose authority with Dante was scarcely second to that of Scripture. To say nothing of the union in punishment of the Avaricious and the Spendthrifts (on strictly Aristotelian principles), we have the astonishing combination of Unnatural Sinners and Usurers, because, according to Aristotle, Art is the child of Nature, and con-

¹ Or, again, as S. Thomas puts it, *Summa*, ii. 2^{dæ} Q. 73, Art. 3: ‘Ex minori vitio potest oriri maius peccatum, sicut ex ira nascitur homicidium et blasphemia.’

sequently the violation of the laws of Nature and that of the principles of Art stand on a similar footing (see *Inf.* xi. 103 *seqq.*). Scarcely less surprising is the conjunction of Suicides and Spendthrifts, but our surprise is diminished when we recollect the saying of Aristotle, that the prodigal who wastes his substance is in some sense a self-destroyer (comp. *Nic. Eth.* IV. i. 5 with *Inf.* xi. 43, 44).

Thirdly, there must always remain in any such classification as that which we are discussing considerable scope for the influence of what mathematicians would call the 'personal equation' of the author. We cannot doubt that the circumstances of Dante's own life and the peculiar and most pressing evils of the times and country in which he lived made certain types of sin to wear a peculiarly odious or a specially heinous aspect. It is enough to point in illustration to his treatment of 'Baratteria,' of which he was himself most falsely accused, and for which he was most unjustly banished; or of Treachery in its various forms and degrees, a vice which, not in Dante's time only, might be regarded as a sort of 'besetting sin' and an ever-present curse of the Italian race, at least in its political life¹. It certainly would not occur to any modern moralist to put Usury below Blasphemy, Suicide, or Murder; to say nothing of the position assigned to Alchemy, Forgery, Flattery, Hypocrisy, &c., in a lower depth than any of the above-mentioned sins. But it is not for the children of those who but little beyond living memory visited forgery and sheep-stealing with the same penalty as murder, to 'cast the first stone' at the anomalies of a mediaeval moralist, who is first and before all things a poet.

II. THE PURGATORIO.

Here we are clear at any rate of the region of controversy, for, as has been already stated, there can be no doubt that

¹ As Machiavelli cynically observes, Alexander VI succeeded in his designs by the constant use of 'inganni,' *perchè conosceva bene questa parte del mondo* (*Principe* c. xviii). According to Dante, Boniface VIII, under the advice of Guido da Montefeltro, adopted similar means, when all others failed, with a like successful result. (See *Inf.* xxvii. 110, 111.)

the seven divisions or *Cornici* of Purgatory correspond with the familiar list of Seven Deadly Sins, *Vitia capitalia* or *principalia*, as they are called by Latin writers. That is, so to speak, the very backbone of the whole structure of the Purgatorio. The chief points which we have now to consider are (1) the source of the particular theory which is adopted by Dante in respect of their names and their order ; and (2) the reasons given by Dante in Canto xvii for insisting upon this particular order. There is much greater variation both in their names and order of arrangement, and even in their number (eight being sometimes enumerated), than I was at all aware of until I looked into the matter with a view to elucidating Dante's treatment of the subject.

Three preliminary points may be briefly noted :—

1. It does not appear that the Church has ever authoritatively adopted this sevenfold classification, though it has been, if I might so say, tacitly assumed by various Church writers from the fifth century downwards, and it is now embodied in various Roman Catholic Catechisms put forth by local authority. It seems so universally taken for granted, that the absence of any general pronouncement on the subject was, to me at least, somewhat of a surprise.

2. I cannot discover who was the author of this celebrated classification. The earliest mention of it that I have found dates from the fifth century, and it is then introduced as something already known and recognized. Some writers ascribe it to Scripture generally, or to S. Paul, or to S. Augustine. They abstain from giving any definite reference to such authorities, and, as a matter of fact, it would have been impossible to do so. Unfortunately, the conspicuous though too rare virtue of 'verifying references' has never been included among the necessary qualifications even for canonization ; nor has the opposite habit ('as is much to be wished') ever been enumerated among the *Vitia capitalia*. We shall have to notice a peculiarly flagrant case of this later on.

3. It is perhaps worth while to explain briefly the now unfamiliar term *Accidia*, which holds an important position in all the various systems of Deadly Sins, and which was

once known in English as Accidie, as it is found in Chaucer, Gower, &c. It is merely the transliteration of the Greek word ἀκηδία, and in Latin writers it is generally found in the form 'acedia'; this has then been Italianized into 'Accidia'.¹ The word itself occurs only once in Dante, viz. *Purg.* xviii. 132: 'dando all' *accidia* di morso,' though the adjective *accidioso* is found also (as we have already noted) in *Inf.* vii. 123, but apparently there not in this technical sense². Also, Latin writers oscillate between the words *acedia* and *tristitia*, to describe the frame of mind which constitutes this sin. Further, as we shall see, some distinguish *Tristitia* and *Acedia* (not always very clearly or successfully), and even make them count as two separate members of the sevenfold list, one of the others being omitted, generally Envy, which is then regarded as the immediate offspring of Pride, and a sort of subdivision of it. The word 'Acedia' then means indifference to, or distaste for, spiritual things; spiritual negligence or sloth. It is in this last aspect that it is chiefly regarded by Dante. Thus it will be remembered that the discipline prescribed for its expiation is constant and restless motion, intense activity and haste³.

I propose now to bring together such information as I have been able to gather as to the variations in the treatment of this subject, to which I have already alluded. The general results will be found tabulated on p. 208 a., and to this Table reference will be made from time to time.

1. *Cassian.*

The earliest notice which I have been able to find of a classification of this kind is in Cassian. He was a con-

¹ Hitherto I have employed the Italian word *Accidia*. It will probably be more convenient now to use the Latin form *Acedia*, since most of the works to be cited are in Latin.

² See *supra*, pp. 174, 175.

³ I cannot resist mentioning another derivation of the word, which a mediaeval writer offers with unsuspecting confidence. '*Acedia* est quasi *Acida* eo quod opera spiritualia nobis *acida* reddat et insipida.' [Adam Abbas quoted by Du Cange, s.v.]

The word ἀκηδία occurs in one of Cicero's pedantic letters interspersed with other Greek words. He reproaches Atticus with ἀκηδία for neglecting to write to him (xii. 45).

temporary, and to some extent a Semi-Pelagian opponent, of S. Augustine, and the founder of the monastic life and system in S. Gaul, where he died in 448 A.D.

Cassian enumerates (*De Octo Prin. Vitiis*, cap. ii. p. 388) eight *principalia vitia*, as he calls them. His list is a peculiar one, and different in its order and contents from any of those adopted later. (See Table, col. 1.) These eight vices are found to be—Pride, Vainglory, Spiritual Weariness (*Acedia*), Gloominess (*Tristitia*), Anger, Avarice, Lust, and Gluttony¹. Now (1) as to the number eight, Pride is a sort of summary of all the others, an inclusive vice, bearing the same relation to the rest as that of Aristotle's *Summum bonum* to individual goods. So in a sense it is 'οὐ συναριθμουμένη.' This is also the case in some other systems (see Table). We should still therefore have practically a sevenfold list in Cassian, as in later catalogues. (2) But further, the constitution of his list even in respect of the seven is peculiar. It will be observed that Envy is not enumerated at all, and we have the subdivision into two distinct Sins or Vices of that which was afterwards often indifferently termed *Tristitia* or *Acedia*, but more technically the latter. (3) As to this distinction, *Tristitia* is described as interfering with eagerness ('cordis alacritas') for prayer, and rendering a man 'ad cuncta operationum vel religionis officia impatientem et asperum' (p. 207). It acts upon the heart as 'a moth fretting a garment' or a worm in wood (p. 208). *Acedia* is described as 'taedium sive anxietas cordis' (p. 214)², and Cassian says that 'beatus David uno versiculo eleganter hoc expressit,' viz. Ps. cxviii. (cxix.) 28. "Dormitavit anima mea prae taedio,"

¹ Cassian, *ed. cit.* pp. 103 and 388. They are given by him in the converse order, but I have rearranged them to suit the other lists in the Table.

² The following passage is quoted by Gazaeus, *Comm.* on Cassian, *De Spiritu Acediae*, cap. 1 (p. 216), as coming from Isidore, *De summo bono*, ii. 37, but I have not been able to find it. It seems to make a much clearer distinction between *Tristitia* and *Acedia* than Cassian does. *Tristitia* = 'aversio a bono quod aestimatur grave et laboriosum.' *Acedia* = 'conversio ad quietem indebitam quae aestimatur lenis et iucunda.' Also I find the following in Isidore, *Sententiarum*, lib. ii. c. 37: '*Tristitiae* gaudium, *acediae* fortitudo . . . opponenda est.' This seems to make 'acedia' nearly = 'pusillanimitas.' *Ibid.* ad fin. Isidore mentions pride as being 'septem vitiorum regina et mater.'

id est, prae acedia' (p. 220, bk. x. c. iv), 'My soul melteth away for very heaviness' (E. V.). The Commentary of Alardus Gazaeus points out the occurrence of the verb *acediare* twice in the Vulgate, viz. in Ecclus. vi. 26 and xxii. 16: 'ne acedieris vinculis eius' (*sc.* Sapientiae). E. V. (v. 25) 'be not grieved with her bonds.' And *ib.* xxii. 16, 'non accediaberis in stultitia illius' (*sc.* stulti). E. V. (v. 13) 'be not disquieted [*marg.* wearied] with his madness.' Cassian adds that this is the special temptation of monks in solitude, 'et maxime circa horam sextam'; and that hence some writers have supposed this to be the meaning of the Psalmist when he speaks of 'daemonium meridianum' in Ps. xc. (xci.) 6: these words being found in the Vulgate, where the E. V. has 'the sickness that destroyeth at the noon-day.' (4) Though it is not explicitly stated that the sins are enumerated in the order of relative gravity, yet as it is distinctly maintained by Cassian elsewhere (*Collat.* v. c. 10, p. 395) that each sin is developed out of its predecessor in the list, it may naturally be inferred that they grow worse as they proceed. The same inference would follow from the *ultima posta* (as Dante says in *Inf.* xxxiii. 111) being assigned to Pride, which is admittedly the crowning sin of all. It is curious to observe how confidently various writers describe the quite natural and even necessary connexion of each sin with the next in their list, though the order itself and the reasons given for it may be entirely different. (5) Lastly, so far as any principles are given for the order adopted, Cassian says (*a*) that the last two are external or bodily; and the other six, internal or mental; also (*b*) that these six arise naturally in order one from the other, 'concatenatione connexa sunt ita ut prioris exuberantia sequenti efficiatur exordium' (p. 395, *Coll.* v. 10 *init.*), and that the eradication of any one implies also that of those which follow from it, yet that the first and second differ in being intensified by the removal of the others. Also, though the eighth arises out of the seventh, they both stand apart in this respect from the first six¹.

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 396. It should be noted that I have again altered the language of Cassian to suit the numbers in the Table.

2. S. Gregory the Great.

The next authority to be quoted is S. Gregory the Great (*d.* 604). In his *Moralia* or Commentary on Job, bk. xxxi. ch. 45, § 87, tom. i. p. 1035, he lays it down that Pride, or Superbia, is 'dux exercitus diaboli,' 'the general of the devil's army'; 'radix cuncti mali'; 'vitiourum regina'; and that its first offspring, 'primae soboles,' are the 'septem principalia vitia,' which he proceeds to enumerate (see Table, col. 2) in the order, Vainglory, Envy, Anger, Gloominess (*Tristitia*), Avarice, Gluttony, Lust. S. Gregory quotes (as most writers on this subject do) the well-known passage in *Ecclus.* x. 15, 'Initium omnis peccati est superbia,' 'Pride is the beginning of sin' (*E. V. v.* 13). So says Chaucer—'Pride is the general rote of all harmes.' It will be noted that Gregory distinguishes the generic term Pride (*Superbia*) from the specific vice of Vainglory (*inanis gloria*), as is done by several subsequent writers.

It may be added that Gregory (1) insists upon this order as being that of natural development (§ 89, tom. i. p. 1036), each vice arising from the one before it in the list; and (2) that he groups the first five together as 'spiritalia vitia' and the last two as 'carnalia vitia' (§§ 88, 89). Compare what has been said in both these respects about Cassian.

3. Isidore.

Of nearly the same date is S. Isidore of Seville (*d.* 636), who is placed among the sainted theologians by Dante in *Par.* x. 131. He says that there are eight 'perfecta vel principalia vitia', Gluttony, Lust, Avarice, Envy, 'Tristitia,' Anger, Vainglory, and finally Pride, which is the leader and the root ('dux et radix') of them all. But in another place he speaks of *seven sins* (not eight) of which Pride is the queen and mother².

The list which I have quoted is different from any that are given in the Table on p. 208 a. The reason why I have not included it is that in the latter passage to which I have

¹ *Allegories quaedam Sacrae Scripturae*, cap. 40, ed. Migne, vol. lxxxiii, col. 96.

² *Sententiarum*, lib. ii. cap. 38, ed. Migne, vol. lxxxiii, col. 639.

referred Isidore declares that Pride is the worst¹, then Lust, then Avarice, and then Gluttony, but he does not pursue the classification further. As this order is quite different from the complete list given by him before, and also is in itself imperfect, I scarcely knew under what head Isidore should be classified.

4. *Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury.*

At the end of the same century we find Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury (668–690) giving the following list (see Table, col. 2) in his *Liber Poenitentialis*². ‘Capitalia igitur crimina iterum *secundum canones* explicabo; idest, Superbia, Vana Gloria, Invidia, Ira, Tristitia, Avaritia, Gula, Luxuria. Pro istis itaque fieri oportet poenitentia magna.’ This list is precisely the same as S. Gregory’s, but I have not as yet been able to trace the authority referred to in ‘*secundum canones*.’ This seems to imply some earlier and authoritative recognition of the list.

5. *S. Aldhelm.*

A slightly later contemporary of Archbishop Theodore is S. Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, who died 709. He wrote a prose treatise *De laudibus Virginitatis*, and also a long poem *De laudibus Virginum*. This is followed by a shorter one entitled *De Octo Principalibus Vitiis*, which is sometimes considered as a part and continuation of the former, and both its commencement and later contents seem to show that it may be rightly so regarded. For he begins by saying that it is not enough to conquer the vice of Impurity, already at length treated of, unless the other seven great sins are also entirely beaten down.

‘Caetera ni fuerint vitiorum crimina septem

Ad diram prostrata necem grassantibus armis’ &c.

These seven we find to be—Gluttony and Drunkenness, Avarice (philarguria), Anger, Tristitia, Acedia, Vainglory

¹ *Op. cit.* col. 642.

² *Liber Poenitentialis*, § vii. vol. ii, p. 7. Cf. Thorpe’s *Ancient Laws*, &c.

³ Migne, vol. lxxxix, col. 281, or ed. Giles, pp. 204 *seqq.* The word *caetera* refers back to the very long treatment of the Sin of Lust (which is therefore now omitted) in the preceding poem *De laudibus Virginum*.

(Kenodoxia), and Pride (see Table, col. 3). Here we have the list of Cassian repeated, except that the order of Lust and Gluttony is changed. As in Cassian, Tristitia and Acedia are distinguished, and also Envy is omitted; but S. Aldhelm goes on to observe that Pride generates Envy, and indeed is a comprehensive vice, and one which is in a different category from the other seven, since all of *them* have their origin among mortals upon earth, while Pride was developed long before in heaven itself.

‘Inter mortales terrena stirpe creantur,
At vero monstrum de quo nunc pagina fertur
Principium sumpsit super alta cacumina coeli.’

6. Egbert, Archbishop of York.

In his *Penitentiary*, c. 750 (Haddan and Stubbs, iii. p. 418), Egbert gives a list in most peculiar order, which however, like Archbishop Theodore, he introduces with the formula ‘*explicabo . . . secundum canones.*’ His order is (see col. 4) Pride, Envy, Lust, Vainglory, Anger, Tristitia, Avarice, Gluttony. And he says that S. Augustine adds to these ‘*Sacrilege.*’ Not only can I find no recognition of a sevenfold or eightfold classification in S. Augustine, but, on the contrary, he had a system of his own entirely different from this¹: for he speaks more than once of three principal vices, viz. *carnis voluptas*, *superbia*, and *curiositas*, corresponding to the three temptations of our Lord.

7. Alcuin.

About half a century later we find this classification of sins again referred to by the learned Alcuin (*d.* 804) in his work *De Divinis Officiis*² (see Table, col. 2). We need only observe that he repeats the list as it is found in S. Gregory, and like him, though mentioning eight sins, evidently regards the sevenfold classification as more logically correct, since he says that all have their common root in Pride. His language clearly indicates this, for he says—‘*De superbia,*

¹ The same may be said of S. Jerome, who says that there are four principal Vices, which are the opposite of the four Cardinal Virtues.

² Ed. Rome (1591), p. 41.

quod est caput omnium vitiorum, oriuntur suprascripta *septem* vitia criminalia.'

8. *Theodulf, Archbishop of Canterbury.*

At the end of the tenth century we have another Archbishop of Canterbury, Theodulf (*d.* 994), who gives a list of Deadly Sins or '*capitalia vitia*,' but the order is a very singular one, and so unlike any other that one would almost suspect that no particular stress was meant to be laid upon it (see Table, col. 5). It is this¹—Gluttony, Lust, Acedia, Avarice, Vainglory, Envy, Anger, Pride. At the same time he says distinctly, 'The first is Gluttony, the second is Lust,' and so on throughout the list, ending in like manner, 'the eighth is Pride.' This certainly seems to imply that he wished to emphasize the order.

9. *Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury.*

Yet one more Archbishop of Canterbury is to be mentioned, the learned Archbishop Peckham, also known as Johannes Pisanus. He was one of the greatest mathematicians of the thirteenth century, his chief work being on Optics². He was a leading Franciscan, and he held a Visitation at Oxford in 1284, in which he publicly condemned several tenets held by the Dominicans, and even in some cases by S. Thomas himself³. The Archbishop in his '*Constitutions*' (1281)⁴ directs all priests four times in the year to expound to their people the following subjects in the vulgar tongue, 'without any fantastical affectation of subtilty,' viz. the fourteen Articles of Faith; the Ten Commandments; the two precepts of the Gospel; the seven works of Mercy; *the seven Capital Sins with their progeny*; the seven principal Virtues; and the seven Sacraments of Grace. This, it will be observed, forms a group of seven subjects. In expanding this instruction he states the seven sins to be—Pride, Envy, Anger, Acedia,

¹ J. Johnson, *Early English Canons*, i. p. 471 (in the Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology).

² Rashdall's *Universities*, &c. iii. p. 526 n.

³ *Ib.* p. 528. See quotation, *supra*, p. 70.

⁴ J. Johnson, *op. cit.* ii. p. 286. Also Wilkins, *Concilia*, ii. pp. 55, 56.

Covetousness, Gluttony, Luxury (see Table, col. 8). 'Acedia' he defines as 'taedium boni spiritualis.' The 'progeny' of the capital sins is also exemplified by a list of sins and vices in detail, which may be traced to them as their sources. His list is the same as that of the other Franciscans, Bonaventura and Hugh of S. Victor, and it only differs from that of S. Gregory in the merging of Pride and Vainglory.

10. *The Sarum Prymer.*

In this connexion we may add the Sarum Prymer, by far the earliest known Prymer in English¹, MSS. of which exist dating from the fourteenth century². In this, after the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, there occurs the following short paragraph:—

'These ben the 7 deedly synnes.

Pride, Envie, Wrathe, Covetise, Slouthe, Glotenye, and Lecherie.' (See Table, col. 4.)

This order is different from any that we have noticed hitherto, in the transposition of Avarice and Acedia, or, as they are termed, 'Covetise' and 'Slouthe': but it is interesting as corresponding with that apparently found in S. Thomas Aquinas (see Table, col. 9), but which, as explained later, can hardly be said to have been formally adopted by him.

We now pass on to authors with whose works Dante himself is known to have been more or less familiar, viz. S. Peter Damian (*d.* 1072); Hugh of S. Victor (*d.* 1141); S. Bernard (*d.* 1153); S. Bonaventura (*d.* 1274); S. Thomas Aquinas (*d.* 1274); and finally, Brunetto Latini (*d.* 1294), who is commonly described as Dante's master and teacher. That Dante owed something to him, and regarded him with respect and even veneration, is clear from *Inf.*, Canto xv. But whether their relation could be accurately described as that of master and pupil is more than doubtful.

11. *S. Peter Damian.*

In this group we mention first S. Peter Damian, with whom Dante converses in the Heaven of Saturn, where mystical

¹ Maskell, *Monumenta*, &c. (1846), vol. ii. p. xxxvii.

² *Ib.* p. xxxiv.

and contemplative Theologians are placed. In his *Opusc. x, De Horis Canonicis*, cap. i¹, he says there are clearly seven 'principalia vitia' from which all the others spring. These he enumerates thus (see Table, col. 6):—Pride, Avarice, Vainglory, Anger, Envy, Lust, Gloominess (*Tristitia*)². He adds to this list of 'principalia vitia' seven 'criminalia peccata,' and also seven 'levia peccata,' the three different classifications being quite out of any relation to one another. The connexion with his subject (i. e. 'De Horis Canonicis') is that, with a view to the 'seven *levia peccata*,' the seven Canonical hours, with their prescribed devotions, have been instituted under the guidance of the Holy Spirit³. As to the *principalia vitia* (with which alone we are now concerned), we may observe that the list is remarkable—(1) in its general order; (2) in that Pride and Vainglory are not only distinguished, but also separated by the interposition of Avarice between them; and (3) Gluttony is omitted altogether, though he denounces this vice strongly enough elsewhere [e. g. *Epist.* lib. vi. 32, tom. i, pp. 113, 114; *Opusc.* xv. c. 20, tom. iii, p. 173].

12. *Hugh of S. Victor.*

Hugh of S. Victor is included by Dante in the circle of twelve Doctors or Teachers associated with S. Bonaventura in *Par.* xii (see l. 133). It will be pointed out in a later Essay (No. V) that he possibly suggested to Dante the idea of connecting the Beatitudes with those seven Virtues which are in direct contrast with the seven Deadly Sins, though it is true that the resemblance between the two writers is not very close. But if Dante had that passage in view, he would have found there a list of the seven Sins ('capitalia vitia') corresponding with that of S. Gregory, except that the number seven is strongly insisted on, and so no distinction is drawn

¹ Tom. iii, p. 105.

² This is the first time we have found '*Tristitia*' in such a favourable position. Perhaps it appeared in a less serious light to one who said that the sin which he found hardest to uproot in himself was his disposition to laughter! *Tristitia* must almost have seemed to him to have some flavour of virtue in it.

³ He quotes Prov. xxiv. 16, '*Septies* [he adds *in die*] cadet justus et resurgit.'

between Superbia and Vana gloria. These he says are the seven fountains from which issue 'the waters of Babylon' which overspread the whole earth; of which 'waters of Babylon (he adds) the Psalmist speaks in Ps. cxxxvi¹.'

13. S. Bernard.

Every one who has read the *Paradiso* will remember the exalted position assigned to S. Bernard in the last three Cantos, as the 'santo Sene' who was specially devoted to the adoration of the Virgin, and in singular favour with her. In the Epistle to Can Grande, Dante particularly recommends, for the understanding of the mystic meaning of his *Paradiso*, the study of the treatise of S. Bernard, *De Consideratione*², together with certain works of S. Augustine and Richard of S. Victor. However, the treatment of the 'Vitia Capitalia' by S. Bernard is so entirely singular, that Dante clearly borrowed nothing from him in regard to this subject, and so its interest is chiefly negative for us. S. Bernard starts like S. Gregory (and to some extent also Cassian) with distinguishing two carnal and five spiritual vices, and also declares (like them) that each one arises from the one before it in order, 'ita ut prioris exuberantia sequentis efficiatur exordium³.' The sevenfold list—each of the members of which is further subdivided into two, three, or even five species—is as follows: Gluttony, Lust (the two carnal vices above referred to), Avarice, Anger, Tristitia, Acedia, Pride (Superbia) (see Table, col. 7). It will be observed that this list very closely resembles that of Cassian, especially when we note further that S. Bernard goes on to describe Pride as falling under three divisions, Pride, Vainglory, and Envy⁴. Of these he says that he will give ready signs by which they

¹ *Annot. Allegor. in Matth.* ii, c. 15, 16, pp. 303 *seqq.* See also ii, c. 3, pp. 295, 296.

² This treatise on the responsibilities of the Papal office was addressed to Pope Eugenius III (Bernard of Pisa), a simple monk whose sudden elevation somewhat alarmed his master and friend S. Bernard. The Pope fled more than once to escape the burden for which he felt himself unequal, though he never went so far as to make a formal 'rifiuto' like Celestine V.

³ Comp. S. Gregory, quoted *supra*, p. 187.

⁴ *Tractatus de Ordine Vitae*, vol. ii, p. 400 D.

are distinguished. These are rather curious—'ista do tibi indicia. Superbia rubet; kenodoxia albet; invidia pallet.' 'Albet' he further explains by the word 'candor,' which is affected by hypocrites, whom he regards as the typical embodiment of 'kenodoxia' or Vainglory.

14. S. Bonaventura.

The principal passage in S. Bonaventura on this subject occurs in the *Speculum B. M. V.*, Lect. IV: 'Ipsa est Maria quae a septem vitiis capitalibus fuit immunissima. Maria enim contra *superbiam* profundissima, per humilitatem: contra *invidiam* affectuosissima, per charitatem: contra *iram* mansuetissima, per lenitatem: contra *acediam* indefessissima, per sedulitatem: Maria contra *avaritiam* tenuissima, per paupertatem: Maria contra *gulam* temperatissima, per sobrietatem: Maria contra *luxuriam* castissima per virginitatem fuit' (tom. vi, p. 456). There is another passage where the same order is recognized in the Commentary on the *Sentences*, Lib. II, Dist. xlii, where he naturally follows S. Peter Lombard, who professes to derive the list from S. Gregory. Pride is placed outside as 'the root of all evil,' but the list is described as one of seven and not eight. In the *Speculum* however, S. Bonaventura himself drops the distinction between Pride and Vainglory. Now this passage seems to me to be the most likely source of Dante's teaching on this subject. It is found in a writer for whom he had a profound admiration, only second to that in which he held S. Thomas, with whom, it will be remembered, he is conspicuously 'bracketed' in *Par.* xii. The list occurs, moreover, in a prominent position in a treatise with which Dante was familiar, and, in particular, in the very chapter of that treatise from which Dante seems to have derived the idea of making the Blessed Virgin his first example of each successive virtue which is held up as the antidote to each of the Seven Deadly Sins on the several *Cornici* of Purgatory¹. It will be noticed on referring to columns 8 and 9 in the Table at p. 208 a., that there is just one point of difference between this classification and that

¹ See *infra*, Essay V, *supra*, p. 63.

of S. Thomas, viz. the relative position of Acedia and Avarice. S. Bonaventura puts Avarice below Acedia, and S. Thomas reverses this order¹. Dante follows the arrangement of S. Bonaventura, and it will not be forgotten that the order with Dante, as with most writers on this subject, involves a judgement as to the relative gravity of the sins. As the Table shows, this was the order most generally familiar, and Dante might certainly have met with it elsewhere. But the reasons above given seem to me to make it extremely probable that this prominent feature of the *Purgatorio* was adopted under the guidance of Bonaventura. It is, as I say, a very prominent feature, for not only is this particular order elaborately defended and justified in Canto xvii, but much appropriate symbolism would be lost, and the whole plan and symmetry of the *Purgatorio* would be deranged, if the order of the sins were altered.

15. S. Thomas Aquinas.

I have already observed that this is one of the rare instances in which Dante does not follow the lead of S. Thomas. I may add that it was this which first suggested to me to undertake the present investigation, since such divergence, besides being rare, affected a very cardinal feature of Dante's system. The list occurs in a part of the *Summa* with which Dante was certainly familiar, since in the formal distinctions between the several vices expounded by Dante in *Purg.* xvii he has clearly borrowed a good deal from what is found a little later in the *Summa* in reference to those subjects. But on the other hand, the enumeration comes in entirely *obiter*², no stress is laid upon the order, nor is any reason given for it (as is so often the case in other writers), and, as far as I know, S. Thomas does not return to the subject, or ever recognize this particular classification elsewhere³. It was

¹ *Summa*, i. 2^{da} Q. 84, Art. 4, *init.*

² Had I sufficiently noticed this at first, I should scarcely have entered into the subject at such length. I hope, however, that this investigation may be thought to have sufficient interest of its own to justify it.

³ There is a passing reference in ii. 2^{da} Q. 10, Art. 1, but it does not throw any light on the question of the order.

therefore perhaps not unnatural that Dante should have recourse to another author in whom the subject has greater prominence, especially as S. Bonaventura is one whose authority was held by Dante in almost equal reverence with that of S. Thomas.

16. *Brunetto Latini.*

Finally, we come to Dante's so-called 'Master,' Brunetto Latini. Whatever may have been the exact nature of their relation, Dante certainly was acquainted with and made use of the works of Brunetto, and especially the *Trésor*, according to the hint which is poetically conveyed in *Inf.* xv. 119:—

'Siatì raccomandato il mio Tesoro
Nel quale io vivo ancora.'

And every one will remember the touching language in which Dante refers to

'La cara e buona imagine paterna' (l. 83)

of one whom he nevertheless sternly condemns to a very evil Circle of Hell. We have no independent contemporary record of the details of Brunetto's private life, but Dante's warmly expressed personal affection to him seems to preclude the possibility of his having deliberately invented such a scandal¹.

If my readers have found this long discussion rather tedious, they may be glad to find the subject assuming in Brunetto's hands a decidedly humorous turn, and this must be my apology for saying so much about him. The passage in which he deals with it occurs in c. xxi of the *Tesoretto*, a long poem in curious short lines of only seven syllables. It is interesting to note that though his order of the Sins is the same as that

¹ A curious story that has survived respecting Brunetto, though not strictly relevant to our subject, may perhaps be inserted here. He, like Dante, suffered exile, though he was more fortunate in being able to secure his return. The story runs that Brunetto, who was by profession a notary, once made some mistake or oversight in drawing a legal document, but he preferred to accept the punishment of exile on the charge of having acted fraudulently, rather than admit that he had shown ignorance or committed a blunder! With him apparently 'a blunder' was 'worse than a crime.'

of Dante, he has thought out quite convincing reasons (though entirely different from those of Dante) for placing them in this particular order. In this passage Brunetto is represented as going secretly to a place called Monposlieri (Montpellier) in order to make a formal and complete confession of all his sins.

'Me n' andai alli frati,
E tutti i miei peccati
Contai, di motto in motto.'

He makes, as he says, quite a clean breast of it, and he admits that there was a serious record against him, but he readily obtained absolution, and so went away much comforted. This appears in the following extracts :—

'Ond' io tutto scoperto
Al frate mi convertò,
Che m' ha penitenziato ;' (ll. 17-19)

and then later (l. 349) :—

'Chè poi che del peccato
Mi son penitenziato,
E sonne ben confesso,
E prosciolto, e dimesso,
I' metto poco cura
D' andare alla Ventura.'

Thus, as he says, he can now face the future with a light heart. Further, having gone through this satisfactory process for himself, he feels in a position at once to turn preacher and recommend it to others :—

'E poich' i' son mutato,
Ragion è che tu muti ;
Che sai che *siam tenuti*
Un poco mondanetti.' (ll. 20-23.)

It is charming to find him coining this delicate and rather dainty diminutive 'mondanetto,' a veritable *ἀπαξ λεγόμενον*, 'a little wee bit worldly,' as we might say, to summarize his past life, which, if Dante's estimate of him is to be credited, would be very inadequately so described.

He advises his brethren then to hurry at once to the holy confessors:—

‘Però vo’ che t’ affretti
Di gire a’ frati santi.’

But first he recommends a systematic course of self-examination, and this subject is pursued for about 300 lines, in which his readers are conducted through the list of the Seven Deadly Sins in order, and in each case Brunetto shows with more or less ingenuity how each sin naturally grows out of the one before it, all having their root and beginning in Pride, according to the idea commonly found. After showing how Pride leads to Envy and Envy to Anger, he says in l. 145,

‘In *ira* nasce e posa
Accidia ‘niquitosa,’

i. e. *Anger* leads on to guilty *Accidia*, and this comes about in this rather far-fetched way. The Passionate man is so completely possessed and overpowered by Anger, that he does not attend Mass, and omits to say his prayers, public and private, and so ends by complete indifference to God and religion.

‘Questi non va a messa,
Nè sa quel sì sia essa;
Nè dice Paternostro
In chiesa, nè in chiostro.’

He proceeds next (rather lamely perhaps) to derive covetousness from *Accidia*, or, as he then conveniently calls it, ‘*negghiezza*’:

‘Di *negghiezza* m’ avvisa
Che nasce *convotisa*,’

i. e. taking *negghiezza* in the wide sense of neglect and mismanagement of one’s affairs, secular as well as spiritual. But I need not pursue the subject further, for I have said enough to show that, though the classification is the same as that of Dante, it is justified on different and somewhat original grounds.

At the end of bk. vii of the *Tesoro* we find a singular list of the seven sins which are there called ‘*peccati criminali*,’ or, as it runs in the original of the *Trésor*, ‘*les criminaus péchiez*.’

They are enumerated thus: Pride, Envy, Anger, Lust, Covetousness, Accidia, Avarice. There are one or two variations of reading. Still the order is strange and irregular, and differs widely from that in the *Tesoretto*. It is, however, extremely doubtful whether Book vii of the *Tesoro* is genuine, so that we cannot say that Brunetto Latini is responsible for this list ¹.

Perhaps I may be permitted to add, as a supplement to this discussion, notices of the subject from two or three sources subsequent to Dante.

In an early and unpublished Commentary on the *Inferno* existing in MS. in the Bodleian ², I found the following note on *Inf.* xix. 109:—

‘Quella che con le sette teste nacque.’

‘Haec est illa meretrix, magna vanitas mundi, in qua fundata et radicata sunt vii vitia capitalia, Superbia, Avaritia, Luxuria, Invidia, Vana gloria, Accidia, Gula.’ This is quite a curious and unique order, which I have not found elsewhere.

Next, Chaucer ³, who not only knew and quoted Dante, but over and over again has imitated him most closely ⁴, has a long discourse on the Seven Deadly Sins in ‘The Persone’s Tale.’ His order in the formal discussion is the same as that of Dante, though, in the first enunciation of the list, the order of Envy and Anger is reversed. The sins are there given thus:—Pride, Ire, Envie, Accidie, Avarice, Glotonie, Lecherie. But in the beginning of the section on Accidie ⁵ the order of

¹ What I have called Book vii of the *Tesoro*, referring to the Sessa edition of 1533, corresponds with chapters xlvi to cxii of Livre II, Partie II, in Chabaille’s edition of the *Trisor*, and the passage quoted is in chapter cxi.

² *Canon. Misc.* 449.

³ Chaucer was in Italy from Dec. 1372 to Nov. 1373, and in some part of 1373 stayed in Florence. It is an interesting speculation whether he may possibly have attended any of Boccaccio’s Lectures on Dante, the first of which was delivered in the Church of San Stefano on Oct. 23, 1373.

⁴ E.g. *Inf.* ii. 8, 9 = p. 331 a (*House of Fame*, ll); *Par.* i. 13 seqq. = p. 337 a (*Ab.* Invocation to III); *Par.* xiv. 28–30 = p. 325 b (*Troilus and Criseyde*, fin.); *Par.* xxxiii *init.* = p. 649 b (*Seconde Nonne’s Tale*, ll. 36 seqq.). Also the story of ‘the erl Hugelyn of Pyze,’ p. 537, in the *Monkes Tale*, which professes to be abbreviated from ‘the grete poete of Itaille That highte Dant,’ &c.

⁵ P. 699, ‘Envye blindeth the herte of a man (cf. *Purg.* xiii. 67 seqq.); and Ire troubleth a man; and Accidie maketh him hevye, thoughtful, and wrawe.’

development is explicitly maintained to be Envie, Ire, Accidie, &c. as in Dante. The previous transposition was therefore probably due to inadvertence.

The classification adopted by Gower in his *Confessio Amantis* is the same as that of Chaucer, Dante, &c. The peculiarity of his treatment consists in the elaborate subdivisions of each of the seven vices, most of them consisting of five, and, in the case of Accidia and Avarice, even of seven and eight 'species.'

It is interesting to note that one of the examples adduced by Gower of the fifth species of envy called 'supplantacion' is Boniface VIII. The whole story is given of the alleged tricks by which Boniface is said to have frightened Celestine into resigning, especially the speaking tube, or 'Trompe of bras' . . . 'whan that the Pope is fast a slepe.' Also how Boniface overcame the doubts of Celestine as to the legitimacy of a Papal abdication by declaring that he, as Pope, could himself declare and make it lawful:—

'Seith: if the Pope woll ordeine,
That there be suche a lawe wrought:
Than might he cesse, and elles nought.'

Again the prophecy (attributed to Celestine) that Boniface would 'come in like a fox, rule like a lion, and die like a dog,' appears thus:—

'Thy entree like a fox was sligh,
Thy reigne also with pride on high
Was liche the lion in his rage:
But at the laste of thy passage
Thy death was to the houndes like.'

In the *Vision concerning Piers the Plowman* the list given is—Pride, Lust, Envy, Avarice, Gluttony, Sloth (*Acedia*). Anger being somehow omitted, we cannot say exactly what the full order would have been. See the Sermon of Conscience in *Pass. V.* ll. 43-241. Afterwards in *Pass. VI.* ll. 107 *seqq.* we learn that seven Sisters act as Warders at the Gate of Paradise, viz. Abstinence, Humility, Charity, Chastity, Patience, Peace, and Liberality. Putting the order out of

the question, there seems to be an easily recognized antithesis between the two lists. Charity is probably the opposite virtue to Envy, as in Dante's treatment (see *Purg.* xiii. 27, 39). Some difficulty might be felt as to the opposition of Peace to Sloth or Acedia, but if it be taken in the sense of inward peace, or the peace of God in the heart, it would be appropriately contrasted with the condition of gloom, sourness, and distaste for spiritual things, which has been described in many of the passages cited earlier in this Essay.

There is only one more classification to be briefly mentioned, not indeed as bearing on Dante, but as forming a sort of corollary to the various mediaeval systems of classification that we have been considering, I mean that which I have found adopted in an authorized Catechism of the Roman Church. When I say 'authorized Catechism' I am speaking of that authorized in England, and probably in substance elsewhere. I am informed that there is no absolute uniformity required in this respect, discretion being left to 'particular or national Churches.' The fact is (as a friend pointed out to me) that the Council of Trent, in one of the Decrees of its twenty-fourth Session, speaks of a Catechism which it was intended to compile, and then to prescribe by authority ('formam a sancta synodo in catechesi singulis sacramentis praescribendam')¹. The context seems to imply that this was meant to have been of a concise and popular description. But the proceedings of the Council were brought to a close before this intention was carried out, and in the twenty-fifth and last Session (*Continuatio*) it was ordered that the Catechism as well as the Missal and Breviary (as revised) should be submitted, when ready, to the Pope, and by him promulgated, if and when approved by him. The result was the elaborate 'Catechismus ad Parochos,' consisting of nearly 500 closely-printed pages. This is commonly described as the Catechism of the Council of Trent, but it was not issued by the Council itself, but by the authority of Pius V. In this, however, I cannot find

¹ Sessio xxiv, *De Reformatione*, cap. vii, p. 159, ed. Tauchnitz, 1866.

any enumeration of the Seven Deadly Sins. But in the small 'Catechism of Christian Doctrine' issued by the authority of the English Hierarchy, and directed to be used in all their dioceses, I find the following list, which, it will be observed, differs widely from any other that we have noticed, nor can I discover when or by whom such a list was first made. It may very likely have originated with some of the Casuistic Theologians, but I have not been able to trace it.

Question 324 runs thus:—

Which are the Seven Capital Sins and their contrary Virtues?

The answer (so far as relates to the first part of the question) is:—

1. Pride; 2. Covetousness; 3. Lust; 4. Anger; 5. Gluttony; 6. Envy; 7. Sloth.

Now if we put these names into Latin—viz. Superbia, Avaritia, Luxuria, Ira, Gula, Invidia, Acedia—it will be found that the initial letters spell out the Memoria Technica word *Saligia*.

In connexion with this I will notice a curious point, which has some bearing on the practice of verifying, or rather not verifying, references. In the valuable *Prompta Bibliotheca* &c. of Ferraris, ed. Naples, 1844-55, vol. vi. p. 117, I find the following singular statement, which makes up nearly the whole of the short article headed *Peccata Capitalia*:—

'Peccata Capitalia, vulgo mortalia, communiter cum S. Gregorio enumerantur septem, indicata hac dictione *Saligia*, singulis literis.'

Now this is a very curious statement. (1) In the first place, the *order* given does not at all correspond with that of S. Gregory, to say nothing of his considering Superbia, or Pride, to be an eighth sin outside the list of seven. (2) It need hardly be said that the Memoria Technica '*Saligia*' is not found in S. Gregory, and further it would be entirely inappropriate to his list (Table, col. 2). I suspect the explanation to be this. The learned author was familiar with the modern authoritative list of Seven Sins, as given in the

Catechism quoted. He was also aware that S. Gregory was almost the earliest, and probably the best known, writer in whom such a classification of sins is found. He *assumed* therefore that these lists would be the same, and, whether he meant (as his language seems to imply) to credit S. Gregory with the *Memoria Technica* also, or not, he at any rate declares that it embodies the result of his teaching on the subject! This it most clearly does not. I owe to the kindness of Dr. Williams of Lincoln College the following 'curiosity of literature.' John de Bridlington (*temp.* Edward III?) in a Latin poem uses the word 'Saligia' as a common noun, and says that the French were beaten by the English because they were more infected with 'Saligia'!¹ It seems to have thus become equivalent to 'συλλήβδην πᾶσα κακία.' If the purely accidental origin of this curious word should ever be forgotten, it will no doubt be satisfactorily explained by the philologists of future generations, as having been quite naturally developed on some recognized philological principles!

The main results of all this would seem to be that the Church has by a sort of general consent accepted the doctrine of seven capital, principal, or (according to the more recent phrase) 'deadly' sins, but that it has not made (as far as I can ascertain) any authoritative declaration which would limit the discretion of individual writers in respect of the relative gravity of these sins, or their mutual interconnexion. In these respects there is only one point on which all seem to be agreed, viz. that Pride is the worst of all, whether it be treated as one of the seven, or as an eighth which is the common root of all the others. Further, it would appear that the classification of S. Gregory is the one that has found most favour, though Pride is sometimes included among the seven (as in col. 8), and sometimes (as with S. Gregory himself) regarded as standing outside the list, as the root

¹ See Wright's *Political Poems and Songs* (Rolls Series), i, p. 173:—

'Gallos coecavit et eos saligia stravit.'

The 'expositio' paraphrases thus:—'Quia igitur Gallici omni peccato mortali fuerunt maculati, unde strati sunt ab Anglicis, dicit auctor *et ros saligia stravit.*'

and source of all the others (as in col. 2). There is in fact practically no difference between these two lists.

It now only remains to explain the passage (which is by no means free from difficulty) in Canto xvii, in which Dante expounds what he considers to be the logical connexion and systematic method involved in this particular arrangement of the Seven Sins. This seems to have been a favourite exercise for theological ingenuity, and, however different may be the order adopted, each writer seems convinced that his particular arrangement is the only natural and almost necessary one. We have had a specimen of this in the case of Brunetto Latini, some of whose reasons were quoted. The same ingenious process may be studied further by those who are curious to do so in the case of Cassian¹, S. Gregory², Hugh of S. Victor³, and S. Bernard⁴.

Dante's process is as follows⁵:—

(i) First of all he lays it down that Love is a universal feeling, being found in the Creator and in every creature (ll. 91, 92).

(ii) Next, Love is of two kinds, (a) Natural, and (b) what Dante calls 'd' animo,' or, as we might perhaps translate, 'instinctive' and 'rational'⁶ (l. 93).

(iii) Love which is 'natural' or 'instinctive' cannot go wrong⁷, but the other can, and that in three ways, by wrong direction (i.e. being directed to a wrong object), or by defect, or by excess (ll. 94, 96).

(iv) But even this 'rational' love, so long as it is directed to the Primal Good (i.e. God)—or the Primal Goods, i.e.

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 395.

² *Ed. cit.* p. 1037, § 89.

³ *Op. cit.* cap. 16, p. 303.

⁴ *Ed. cit.* p. 401.

⁵ See Table II. *infra*, p. 209.

⁶ This distinction seems to be borrowed from the *Summa*. See especially i. Q. 60, Art. 1, and i. 2^{da} Q. 26, Art. 1. We find in these passages three divisions of 'amor,' or 'dilectio,' recognized, viz. (1) naturalis, (2) sensitivus, (3) intellectualis, intellectivus, or rationalis. It appears also that, in different kinds of natures, (2) and (3) may be the forms in which (1) manifests itself.

⁷ Again from Aquinas—'dilectio naturalis semper est recta; cum amor naturalis nihil aliud sit quam inclinatio naturae indita ab auctore naturae. Dicere ergo quod inclinatio naturae non sit recta est derogare auctori naturae,' *Summa*, i. Q. 60, Art. 1. Also comp. the distinction in Arist. *Nic. Eth.* III. xi, between ἐπιθυμία κοιναί and ἰδιοὶ καὶ ἐπιθετοί.

God and Virtue¹—and even if it be directed to secondary Goods in due measure and proportion, cannot be productive of any wrong pleasure (ll. 97–99).

(v) (We now come finally to the conditions under which *wrong* comes in.) But if this rational Love (*a*) be perverted to what is evil, or (*b*) be directed with excessive or defective energy to what is good, then 'the thing made' works against 'Him that made it' (ll. 100–102).

(vi) From all this we conclude that Love in one form or another is the source of every action whatsoever, whether good or bad (ll. 103–105).

This generalization is, I take it, very much the same as that with which Aristotle begins his Nicomachean Ethics. It expresses the obvious truth that every action or purpose of our lives is prompted by the desire or love of something, the attainment of which, as the result of such action or purpose, appears to us to be 'desirable.' We might perhaps further illustrate it by the characteristic *dictum* of S. Augustine:—'*Non faciunt bonos vel malos mores nisi boni vel mali amores*'².

Dante now proceeds to apply these general principles to the analysis of the different forms or types of Evil.

1. Since love cannot consciously turn away from the welfare of its subject—or (in plain words) since no one can desire what does not appear to himself to be desirable—it follows that no thing or being can hate itself (ll. 106–108)³.

2. Since no being can be conceived as existing of itself, and separated from Him 'in whom we live and move and have

¹ Two readings occur here, both well supported: '*nel primo ben*' and '*ne primi ben*.' The former has perhaps rather the look of being '*facilior*,' and it seems more likely to be a correction of the latter than *vice versa*.

² Epist. civ. § 13. Comp. *Serm.* cccxi. § 10. Also Aquinas *passim*, no doubt following Aristotle, e.g. *Summa*, i. 2^{da} Q. 28, Art. 6: '*Omne agens agit propter finem aliquem; . . . finis autem est bonum desideratum et amatum unicuique. Unde manifestum est, quod omne agens quodcumque sit, agit quamcumque actionem ex aliquo amore.*'

³ *Summa*, i. 2^{da} Q. 29, Art. 4: '*Impossibile est quod aliquis per se loquendo odiat seipsum.*' Cf. *Conv.* IV. xxii. 47–52, also Eph. v. 29: '*No man ever yet hated his own flesh.*'

our being,' hatred of God is also impossible, since it would be tantamount to hatred of oneself (ll. 109-111)¹.

3. It follows therefore that if any evil be loved or desired as such, it must be the evil of *one's neighbour*, and that is possible in three ways, or, as Dante expresses it, 'this love (i.e. of Evil) arises in your clay in three ways'² (ll. 112-114).

(i) A man may desire evil to his neighbour solely that he may shine *by contrast*. In this case the depression of others is desired only as a necessary condition for setting off and ensuring our own superiority (ll. 115-117).

That is *Pride*.

(ii) A man may desire evil to his neighbour because of the

¹ This point also is discussed by Aquinas in the *Summa* (ii. 2^{dae} Q. 34, Art. 1). Observing the inconsistency of the conclusion thus summarily expressed with our Lord's statement, 'They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father,' and also with other passages of Scripture, S. Thomas decides that God cannot be hated in Himself ('secundum essentiam suam') but only in respect of some of the consequences of His Justice ('secundum quosdam iustitiae suae effectus'), which, like any other form of chastisement, cannot 'for the present seem to be joyous but grievous' (Heb. xii. 11). The distinction seems not to be a very practical one, for in *Summa* i. 2^{dae} Q. 87, Art. 4, he says: 'In peccato duo sunt. Unum est aversio ab incommutabili bono, quod est infinitum, unde ex hac parte peccatum est infinitum. Aliud quod est in peccato est inordinata conversio ad commutabile bonum: et ex hac parte peccatum est finitum.' Thus he himself slips into the natural mode of expression which makes hatred of God possible. For another way in which this may be explained, see S. Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, xv. c. 22: 'Creator enim si veraciter ametur, hoc est, si ipse, non aliud pro illo, quod non est ipse, ametur, male amari non potest.' The words italicized seem to point to a distinction like that of Aquinas, i.e. that, if men hate God, it is some distorted or wrong conception of God, not God as He really is. Or as Tennyson more bluntly puts it: 'The general English view of God is that of an immeasurable clergyman; and some mistake the Devil for God' (*Life*, ii. p. 90).

² Many of the following details of expression, though not this exact classification, come almost *verbatim* from Aquinas, *Summa*, i. 2^{dae} Q. 84, Art. 4. But the distinction between Pride and Envy is perhaps best illustrated by the following passage from Hugh of S. Victor (*Alleg. in Matth.* c. iv. p. 296):—'*Superbus gaudet se habere quod alius non habet, vel ut habeat quod alius non habet . . . igitur amor propriae excellentiae vocatur.*' (Compare 'per esser suo vicino soppresso spera eccellenza'.)

'*Invidia odium est felicitatis alienae . . . non enim tibi displicere poterat id alium habere nisi quod tu prius solus habere voluisti. Propterea laedit te et gravis est tibi aliena felicitas.*' (Compare 'teme di perder perch' altri sormonti'.)

'In *superbia* perverse tibi placet quod tu es; in *invidia* inique tibi displicet quod alius est.'

actual loss to himself involved by power, honour, fame, &c., being in the hands of some one else. A man dislikes seeing others enjoying the good things which might have been in his own possession otherwise, and on this ground wishes evil to his neighbour¹ (ll. 118-120).

That is *Envy*.

(iii) He may do so because a sense of *injury received by himself* breeds the desire of vengeance (ll. 121-123).

That is *Anger*.

These three forms of the *love of Evil*, 'triforme amor' (l. 124), are punished on the three lower *Cornici*, which Dante and Virgil have already traversed. These all deal with Love directed to a *wrong object*, and therefore Pride, Envy, and Anger, as their nature has now been expounded by Dante, must be the three worst types of sin, since they have nothing good about them, not even in their object. See l. 95, '*malo obbietto*'; and l. 100, '*al mal si torce*.' But it is different

¹ There are two passages in the *Convito* which illustrate this account of Envy, in both of which Dante insists on a certain *equality* between oneself and the person envied being a necessary condition of the feeling, '*la paritade ne' viziosi è cagione d' invidia*' (*Conv.* I. iv. 43 *seqq.*). Compare c. xi. 112 *seqq.*: '*la invidia è sempre dove è alcuna paritade*.' Hence the feeling that any addition to one's neighbour involves subtraction from oneself, as explained in the text. See also *Purg.* xv. 49-51:—

'Perchè s' appuntan li vostri desiri
Dove *per compagnia parte si scema*,
Invidia move il mantaco ai sospiri.'

See also *Summa*, ii. 2^d Q. 36, Art. 1: '*Alio modo bonum alterius aestimatur ut malum proprium, in quantum est diminutivum propriae gloriae vel excellentiae. Et hoc modo de bono alterius tristatur invidia. . . . Ideo his qui multum distant vel loco vel tempore vel statu homo non invidet, sed his qui sint propinqui, quibus se nititur aequare vel praeferre.*' So in *Comm. in Sent.* ii, Dist. 42, Art. 4: '*invidia tristatur de bono alterius prout aestimatur impeditivum proprii boni.*'

Compare the description of Gower in the *Confessio Amantis*:—

'For where he maie another see,
That is more gracious than hee:
It shall not stonden in his might,
But if he hinder such a wight:
And that is well nigh over all,
This vice is nowte so general.'

The last two lines remind us of Dante's description of Florence in *Inf.* vi. 49, 50, and *Par.* ix. 129.

with the four Sins which have still to be treated of. The *objects* are at least good in various degrees, but they are pursued in a wrong *manner*: viz. in defect or excess. See ll. 100, 101—

‘quando . . . con più cura
O con men che non dee corre nel *bene*,’

l. 126—

‘Che corre al *ben* con ordine corrotto.’

Thus in the case of *Accidia*, its object is *entirely good*, being the ‘*primi ben*,’ God and Virtue: the fault consists in the neglect to pursue it with sufficient energy (ll. 130–132).

In the case of the three remaining sins, the fault lies in the *excessive* pursuit of ends not essentially otherwise than good. They involve, as Dante says in l. 133, the exaltation of a secondary good above its proper place, and treating it as though it were capable of securing man’s happiness. These three forms of legitimate love or desire, if carried to excess, are punished in the three remaining *Cornici* of Purgatory. As the love of evil was described as ‘*triforme amor*’ in l. 124, so this excessive love or desire of secondary goods is called ‘*tripartito*’ in l. 138. For Avarice, Gluttony, and Lust, all have relation to desires not of themselves and essentially evil. The evil is in the *excess* with which they are pursued. And, as Virgil says, the distinction in these cases can be easily traced, without any further assistance from himself (l. 139). They do not need any special elucidation, such as was required in the case of the first three Vices, and more particularly in regard to Pride and Envy, in order to make clear their relation to the common principle attributed to them by Dante, viz. ‘the love of Evil.’

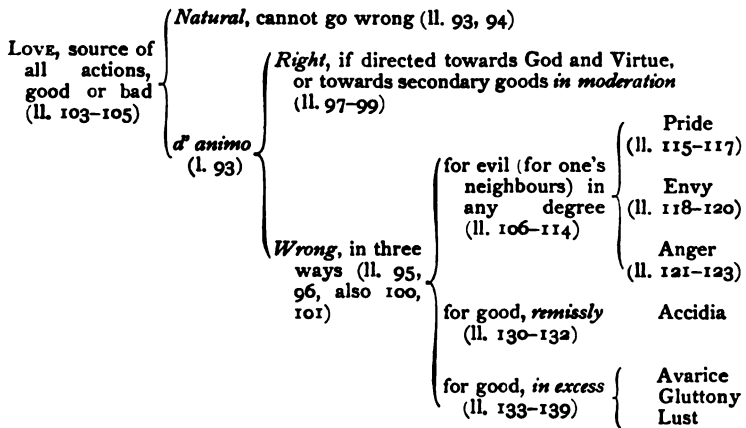
In conclusion, let me observe once more that the *central* position of ‘*Accidia*’ is an absolutely essential feature in Dante’s scheme of classification. The transposition of Avarice and *Accidia* (as in the list given *obiter* by S. Thomas) would throw all into confusion.

	VIII	IX	X		XI
8					
1	Pride	Pride	Pride	Superbia	Pride
2	Envy	Envy	Avarice	Avaritia	Avarice
3	Anger	Anger	Lust	Luxuria	Lust
4	Acedia	Avarice	Anger	Ira	Envy
5	Avarice	Acedia	Gluttony	Gula	Vainglory
6	Gluttony	Gluttony	Envy	Invidia	Acedia
7	Lust	Lust	Acedia	Acedia	Gluttony
	—	—	—	—	—
	Hugh of S. Victor (<i>d.</i> 1141)	Aquinas (<i>d.</i> 1274)	Modern R. C. Catechism [note the <i>Mem. Tech.</i> 'Saligia' formed by the initial letters, <i>v.</i> <i>supra</i> , pp. 202, 203]		MS. Comm. on <i>Inf</i> xix. 109 in Bodleian <i>Canon. Misc.</i> 449
	S. Bonaventura (<i>d.</i> 1274)	Sarum Prymer			
	Abp. Peckham (<i>d.</i> 1292)				
	Brunetto Latini (in <i>Tesoretto</i>) (<i>d.</i> 1294)				
	DANTE				
	—				
	Chaucer (<i>d.</i> 1400)				
	Gower (<i>d.</i> 1402)				

edia (*Tristitia saeculi*).

TABLE II

CLASSIFICATION OF *PURG.* XVII.



IV. DANTE'S PERSONAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS DIFFERENT KINDS OF SIN

THE object of the present Essay is to trace the personal feelings manifested by Dante from time to time in regard to the different forms of Sin or classes of Sinners which are brought before us in the *Inferno*. His emotions, whether of pity, sympathy, indignation, contempt, disgust, do not always or necessarily correspond with his deliberate judgement as to the relative heinousness of the different sins. There are many aspects or qualities of sins which keenly excite our personal feelings, while influencing in a much less degree, if at all, our judgement as to their gravity in themselves. Some sins, for example, are peculiarly odious, degrading, contemptible; or specially pernicious in their effects on society. Others, on the other hand, are often associated with some qualities that command our sympathy or even admiration, as, for example, if they ever involve an element of courage, endurance, self-forgetfulness, or even it may be generosity¹. However strongly we may condemn such sins, we cannot feel contempt or loathing for the sinners. Again, there may be in individual cases some conditions or circumstances in the sinner himself which mitigate our condemnation, or, if not our formal condemnation, at least the

¹ Compare with this distinction (as well as with that in the passage of Cicero quoted, p. 158) the following from George Eliot :—'His faults were all of a generous kind, impetuous, warm-blooded, leonine; never crawling, crafty, reptilian' (*Adam Bede*, c. xii). The same author elsewhere distinguishes 'clean pride' and 'mucky pride.' Another writer observes :—'Even evil passions, if they are on a great scale, are generally closely related to noble passions, and often grow in the same soil' (*Spectator*).

spirit and manner in which it is delivered. Our present object then is to trace the varying phases of Dante's *personal feeling* respecting the different sins or sinners, as he freely gives vent to them in his passage through the *Inferno*. His *judicial attitude* to them may be taken to be reflected in his formal classification of sins which is dealt with in the previous Essay. As to this, I need say no more here than repeat that his general plan is to exhibit sins in a scale of increasing gravity as he *descends* in the *Inferno*, and on a scale of diminishing gravity as he *ascends* in the *Purgatorio*.

It must be remembered, however, that the most formal classification of this kind cannot be expected to be wholly free from the influence of what I have ventured to call the 'personal equation' of its author. (See what has been already said on this subject in the last Essay, p. 182.)

If some of the passages that we shall have to quote appear, according to the canons of modern taste, coarse, commonplace, or undignified, we must bear in mind two or three considerations. (1) The very different standard of 'taste' in such respects which prevails in periods separated by only two or three generations, to say nothing of 600 years: a difference, be it remembered, which may not always be more than conventional and superficial, though, as Aristotle says, 'διαφέρει οὐ μικρὸν ταῦτα πρὸς εὐσχημοσύνην' (*Nic. Eth.* IV. viii. 6)¹. (2) We are dealing now only with the *Inferno*, in which Dante undertakes to present to us, and that with an unflinching realism, the well-merited punishment of the *worst* types both of sins and sinners². We cannot expect a high level of refinement in all the details, if there is to be any truthfulness in such a presentment. 'With the froward thou shalt learn frowardness'; or in the words of Dante's own apology—

'nella chiesa

Coi santi, e in taverna co' ghiottoni³.'

In such cases, to borrow once more the language of Aristotle, if the ἥθη cannot be wholly χρηστά, there must be no

¹ See; further, Supplementary Note I. at the end of this Essay.

² Cf. *Par.* xvii. 136-142.

³ *Inf.* xxii. 14, 15.

gratuitous villainy (πονηρία μὴ ἀναγκαία)¹, no gloating over vice and baseness for its own sake: as Dante himself says,

'Che voler ciò udir è bassa voglia².'

(3) Finally, Dante more than once describes his own work as a *Commedia*, and, insisting on the propriety of the title, alleges among other reasons the commonplace language which is found in it—'remissus est modus loquendi et humilis³.' A Comedy he would have it to be, though succeeding ages have rightly agreed that it is a 'Divine Comedy⁴.'

It will be well first to analyze briefly the various feelings with which we may regard the wrong-doings of our fellow-men in their various consequences. We cannot do so better than under the guidance of Aristotle again, chiefly as found in that most modern in tone of all his works, the *Poetics*, with which Dante had not the opportunity of becoming acquainted, familiar though he was with most of the works of the great Master⁵. If vice or villainy is successful, then, as Aristotle says (in the *Ethics* and in the *Rhetoric*), we feel *νέμεσις*, i. e. Virtuous Indignation, or Resentment in the sense in which the latter word is used by Bishop Butler and others, before (like many other similar terms in *Morals*) its meaning became restricted and deteriorated. If on the other hand vice or villainy leads to disaster, and especially if that should take the form of acute suffering or some overwhelming calamity, then there is, and must needs be, a conflict between the feeling of satisfaction that justice is vindicated, and the feeling of some sort of sympathy with human suffering;

¹ *Poet.* c. xv. § 5.

² *Inf.* xxx. 148.

³ *Ep.* x. § 10, l. 223.

⁴ The title seems to have been first used in the edition printed by Giolito in 1555. It is erroneously stated by Colomb de Batines (i. p. 78) to have occurred in an edition with the Commentary of Landino in 1516.

⁵ Giambattista Gelli, in his Lectures on the *Inferno* delivered c. 1550, apologizes for Dante's use of the term *Commedia* in a sense not quite conforming to the Aristotelian *dicta*, on the ground that he could not have been acquainted with them, 'non si essendo veduto se non, si può dire, *ne' tempi nostri* la Poetica d'Aristotele, senza la quale non si può aver la perfetta cognizione della diversità de' poemi' (*Comment. on Inf.* xxi. 2).

⁶ Cf. *supra*, p. 159, note 3.

a feeling akin to, but falling somewhat short of, pity, which Aristotle in the *Poetics* seems to denote by φιλανθρωπία as distinguished from ἔλεος¹. This feeling may be illustrated by the beautiful lines of Wordsworth in *Laodamia* :—

‘Yet tears to human suffering are due,
And mortal hopes defeated and o’erthrown
Are mourned by man’;

or by the well-known words of Virgil :—

‘Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt’².

If, however, the crime or sin thus avenged be exceptionally flagrant, odious, or contemptible, the feeling of satisfaction preponderates³, and in extreme cases becomes an entirely pitiless exultation over the fallen victim, which vents itself in ὕβρις or insult. The conflict between these two feelings is very finely depicted by Aeschylus in the beginning of the *Prometheus Vincitus*, in the contrast between the treatment of the suffering Prometheus by Hephaestus and by Κράτος καὶ Βία respectively. Further, the latter feeling is sometimes consciously reinforced, and the former deliberately suppressed, by religious considerations, as in certain passages in the Psalms. Of this we have a notable instance in *Inf.* xx. 28–30 :—

‘Qui vive la pietà quando è ben morta.
Chi è più scellerato che colui
Che al giudizio divin passion porta?’

I must apologize for the frequent use of this convenient term ‘ὕβρις,’ which has no exact equivalent that I can think of in English. It combines the inward feeling of scorn or contempt with its outward expression in the way of something like studied insult or mockery. This may take place

¹ See *Poet.* c. xiii. § 2 for a description of φιλανθρωπία, and compare also *Nic. Eth.* VIII. i. 3. The meaning above given to this word is disputed by Prof. Butcher in his recent admirable edition of the *Poetics*.

² *Aen.* i. 462.

³ This also is recognized by Aristotle in *Rhet.* II. ix. § 4 : ‘Ο γὰρ λυπούμενος ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀναξίως κακοπραγοῦσιν ἡσθήσεται, ἢ ἄλυπος ἔσται, ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐναντίας κακοπραγοῦσιν. Οἷον τοὺς πατρολοίας καὶ μαυφόνους, ὅταν τύχῃσι τιμωρίας, οὐδεὶς ἂν λυπηθεί χρηστός· δεῖ γὰρ χαίρειν ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις.

under circumstances in which such insult is thought to be justifiable and appropriate, even as Dante once pleaded—

‘E cortesia fu in lui esser villano.’ (*Inf.* xxxiii. 150.)

That there *are* such circumstances we may gather from certain examples found in Scripture. For instance, the savage irony with which Elijah mocks the disappointed priests of Baal—‘Cry aloud, for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked’ (1 Kings xviii. 27). We might also quote in illustration (though certainly not applying to it the precise term ὕβρις) the language attributed to God in Prov. i. 26, ‘I also will laugh at your calamity. I will mock when your fear cometh.’ We may finally compare the same idea in Aesch. *Eumen.* 560 seqq. :—

‘Γελᾷ δ’ ὁ δαίμων ἐπ’ ἀνδρὶ θερμουργῶ
τὸν οὐποτ’ αὐχοῦντ’ ἰδὼν ἀμηχάνοις
δύαις λέπαδνον, οὐδ’ ὑπερθέοντ’ ἄκραν.’

It is much in this sense that Aristotle says of the μεγαλόψυχος, or High-minded Man, that he does not ordinarily use strong or bad language even of his enemies, ‘εἰ μὴ δι’ ὕβριν,’ i.e. except when he wishes to express his scorn or contempt for them. We may be sure that Aristotle would not have used the word here unless he thought the conduct which it describes was justifiable and even commendable under the circumstances. So much as to the justification of the feeling and expression of ὕβρις over a fallen victim under certain conditions. I put this point somewhat prominently forward, because, though I shall endeavour to trace Dante’s personal feelings of whatever kind (and sometimes they are those of the tenderest pity) towards the fallen sinners, yet the expression of a pitiless ὕβρις is so much more frequent, it often takes such extreme and extravagant forms, and moreover even in itself (like Dante’s¹ habit of self-assertion or μεγαλοψυχία) it seems so much out of harmony with our

¹ See *Dante and his Early Biographers*, pp. 140 seqq.

modern habits of colourless or nerveless self-repression, that the following investigation will in fact be chiefly occupied with tracing out and illustrating the prevalence of this feeling of *ῥῆσις* in Dante¹.

We meet very early with an example of such contemptuous scorn in Dante's treatment of the 'Vigliacchi' (as they have sometimes been called) in the Ante-Inferno. This treatment is in some ways very difficult to explain. Their punishment is both very severe and also loathsome and humiliating. (See *Inf.* iii. 64-69.) They do not seem to gain much in this way by escaping the Inferno. In fact we feel inclined to ask, in Dante's own language about another class of sinners (*Inf.* xi. 73-75):—

'Perchè non dentro dalla città roggia
Son ei puniti, se Dio gli ha in ira?
E se non gli ha, perchè sono a tal foggia?'

One can say little more in explanation than this. First, and chiefly, this may be regarded as a poetic device for displaying the intense bitterness of contempt which Dante personally felt for such poor-spiritedness (*pusillanimità*). The feeling and the form of its expression, if not suggested, might at least seem justified by the language applied to the lukewarm Laodiceans in *Rev.* iii. 14, 15, and especially the expressions, 'I would thou wert cold or hot,' and 'I will spue thee out of my mouth': see *Inf.* iii. 40, 41, and 50. Secondly, Dante seems also to have felt that the condemned would gain some glory from seeing these milder sinners in like condemnation with those who had sinned with a high hand (for certainly *alcuna* is 'some' and not 'no' in iii. 42, as also in xii. 9). We

¹ I may venture to add a 'modern instance,' which is quite Dantesque in its outspokenness, though I say nothing as to its appropriateness to the circumstances or occasion which provoked it. I saw exhibited at the Victorian Exhibition, a few years ago, an autograph letter of Mr. Disraeli to a son of Daniel O'Connell, who had complained of some language that had been used by the former about his father. 'Now, Sir' (writes Disraeli), 'it is my hope that I have insulted him; assuredly it was my intention to do so. I wished to express the utter scorn in which I hold his character, and the disgust with which his conduct inspires me.' I am sure there are many cases in which such words would exactly express both Dante's feelings and the justification he would offer for them.

arraignment

may note then at the outset this singular arrangement as an illustration of Dante's very bitter *personal* attitude towards this type of sin.

Again, on the very threshold of the *Inferno* proper, Dante strikes as it were a keynote of this tone of *ὑβρις* in the grotesque and insulting form in which Minos declares his sentences of condemnation: see *Inf.* v. 4-15. It is surely a strange idea to assign the act of judgement and condemnation—'atto di cotanto uffizio'—to a hideous grinning demon (for such has Minos become in Dante's conception), with a tail of such amazing proportions as to be capable of encircling his body at least nine times. Moreover it is by no formal sentence that the doom is pronounced, but only by the lashing of this monstrous tail round the creature's body so many times as to indicate the number of the Circle of Hell to which the sinner is thus silently and contemptuously condemned:—

'Cignesi colla coda tante volte,
Quantunque gradi vuol che giù sia messa.' (ll. 11, 12.)

Like Naaman in his cure, so they in their condemnation have not even the paltry satisfaction of any form or ceremony being expended on them. If any formal sentence beyond this contemptuous action is expressed at all, it is no more than was vouchsafed to the great Guido da Montefeltro:—

'Questi è de' rei del foco furo.' (*Inf.* xxvii. 124-7.)

So with a 'short shrift' they are unceremoniously thrust down:—

'Dicono e odono, e poi son giù volte.' (v. 15.)

A truly astonishing outburst of *ὑβρις* on the part of Dante at the very outset, in which he speaks, like his own Farinata,

'Come avesse lo inferno in gran dispetto'.¹

¹ Dante's treatment of Minos is strangely at variance with that of classical antiquity. In Plato, for example (see *Gorgias* 523-4 and 526 C), his position is one of high dignity, holding, as he does, the supreme place of honour and even reviewing the judgements of Aeacus and Rhadamanthus, who have no place in Dante's system. Though Dante probably knew nothing of Plato in this

After this, the descent of the several Circles commences. The victims of the Sin of Incontinence (in the modern and more restricted sense of the word) come first, and though Dante does not shrink from meting out to them very severe punishment, yet he speaks of them with sorrowful respect and unrestrained pity, so much so indeed that when he heard several of them named he confesses,

'Pietà mi giunse, e fui quasi smarrito' (v. 72):

and, at last, after the touching episode of Francesca and Paolo:—

'di pietade

Io venni meno sì com' io morisse;

E caddi, come corpo morto cade.' (ll. 140-142.)

Perhaps, among other reasons, this may be due to the fact that so many of the great ones of the earth are found to be involved in this condemnation (see ll. 67-71). The same feeling prevails with Dante, and for the same reason, in a much lower circle of Hell, and where a much viler form of the same kind of sin is punished (see Cantos xv and xvi). In the case of the two most prominent victims in the second Circle, viz. Francesca and Paolo, there would further be in all probability the tie of personal affection to Francesca, or at least of that of friendship and gratitude to her family. Besides this too, there would be a strong palliation for her fault to be found in the shameful deception that had been

respect, yet he has strangely departed from the picture of Minos drawn by Virgil, though there is sufficient correspondence of details to show that he had not forgotten the passage. Compare *Aen.* vi. 427, 432-3, with *Inf.* v. 5, 13, 14. As in Virgil, Minos sits 'in limine primo,' and, 'vitas et crimina discit,' so Dante describes him as 'conoscitor delle peccata' who 'esamina le colpe nell' entrata.' (On the combination by Dante here of some of the details of two different passages in *Aen.* vi, viz. ll. 427-433 and ll. 566 *seqq.*, see *Studies in Dante*, i. pp. 183-4.) Another instance of *ὕβρις* applied to one of the beings of Classical Antiquity occurs in *Inf.* vii. 1, where Plutus is contemptuously described as 'clucking' ('voce chioccia'). We may also mention, in connexion with Dante's treatment of Minos, his curious transformation of Geryon, as the symbol of Fraud ('sozza imagine di froda,' *Inf.* xvii. 7), into a monster half-man and half-serpent. This is difficult to account for, but Dante may possibly have had some vague recollection of the Virgilian expression 'forma tricornis umbræ' (*Aen.* vi. 289), and may have thought this diversity of form suitable to symbolize fraud.

practised upon her, and in her sincere, and, from the first, most natural devotion and fidelity to Paolo. Dante might well plead for her in such language as that of Wordsworth,

‘Ah! judge her gently who so deeply loved.’

And so it is permitted to these faithful lovers that even ‘in death they are not divided.’

For the sins of Gluttony, and of Avarice and Prodigality, which follow in the next two Circles (third and fourth), Dante’s contempt and disgust are shown by the loathsome details of the punishment inflicted, even as he says himself—

‘sì fatta pena
Che, s’ altra è maggio, nulla è sì spiacente’¹. (vi. 47, 48.)

The former Sinners are drenched with eternal rain and hail and snow, and, lacerated by the raging Cerberus, they howl like dogs themselves (see vi. 7-21, 34-36, 100, 101). The latter are represented as eternally rolling stones like Sisyphus one against the other, amidst savage cries and mutual vituperations (see vii. 28-33, 43-45, 49-60). At the same time Dante still admits the sentiment of pity, which is not yet extinguished or even repressed. See vi. 58-59, where even in reference to the brutish Ciacco he exclaims—

‘Ciacco, il tuo affanno
Mi pesa sì, che a lagrimar m’ invita:’

and vii. 36 (respecting the Avaricious and Prodigal)—

‘Ed io che avea lo cor quasi compunto,’ &c.

In the next Circle however, where Anger is punished, his tone changes, and we meet with the first instance of insult directed against an individual sufferer in the case of Filippo Argenti, whom both Virgil and Dante treat with the utmost contumely from the first moment of their meeting with him

¹ A curious parallel to this occurs in *Purg.* xix. 117, where Dante says of the punishment of the Avaricious,

‘E nulla pena il monte ha più amara.’

(see viii. 35-42). For his savage treatment of this sinner, Virgil solemnly blesses Dante in the quasi-Scriptural language—

‘Alma sdegnosa,
Benedetta colei che in te s’ incinse.’ (ll. 44, 45.)

Not content with this, Dante further begs that he may be permitted to see him well soused in the miry broth (*broda*, l. 53) by the muddy folk (*fangose genti*, l. 59), for his own special delectation, before they leave the spot. That wish, commended by Virgil, is amply gratified later (see ll. 58-63), and Dante still thanks and praises God when he remembers what he then saw:—

‘Che Dio ancor ne lodo e ne ringrazio.’ (l. 60.)

There is no reason, as far as I know, to suspect any feeling of personal enmity as inspiring this ferocious scene¹. Rather would Dante feel (like the sturdy Covenanters with whose portraits Scott has made us familiar) that he was fully entering into the spirit of the Psalmist—‘The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance, he shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly’².

¹ Nor indeed, as far as I am aware, in any other case. We must emphatically repudiate the shallow and ignorant suggestion which has sometimes been made, that Dante took advantage of his subject to gibbet his personal enemies or opponents. Rather may the following language of Mazzini be fully accepted:—‘Dante had too much greatness in his soul, and too much pride (it may be), to make revenge a personal matter; he had nothing but contempt for his own enemies [as Aristotle says of the *μεγαλόψυχος* in the passage already quoted—*ὅς τε ἴσται κακολόγος . . . εἰ μὴ δι’ ἑβρην]*, and never, except in the case of Boniface VIII, whom it was necessary to punish in the name of Religion and of Italy, did he place a single one of them in the Inferno, not even his judge, Cante Gabrielli’ (Essay *On the Minor Works of Dante*, p. 219). Similarly, it may be added, he has placed only one personal friend in Paradise, viz. Carlo Martello, son of Charles II and titular King of Hungary (Canto vii). He may possibly also have had some personal acquaintance with Piccarda Donati in his childhood (Canto iii).

² In this Circle Devils are first met with (see viii. 82), but not as tormentors of the lost souls. That first occurs in the first Bolgia of the eighth Circle, viz. Canto xviii (Panders and Seducers); again in the fifth Bolgia in Cantos xxi and xxii (Barattieri); and in the ninth in Canto xxviii (those who cause Schism and Divisions). A distinction must be drawn between these Demons as inflictors of torture, and the Centaurs, Minotaur, &c., who are rather a kind of infernal police; each of the nine Circles (except, naturally, the first or

In the sixth Circle (that of the Heretics and Epicurean Materialists) Dante speaks with so much respect of the victims—again perhaps because of their great dignity and fame¹, as in the cases of Farinata, the Emperor Frederic II, and the Cardinal degli Ubaldini (the names which he selects for special notice)—that he has laid himself open to the suspicion of some personal sympathy with Freethinking itself, as has been argued on this very ground. But it is difficult to see how else Dante could have expressed himself, having regard to the nature of the sin, and the character and dignity of the sinners². Anything like contempt would here of course be absurd, and the expression even of pity would be almost equally out of place in regard to such leaders of men in thought and action as are here presented to us—

‘perchè d’ amaro
Sente il sapor della pietate acerba’ (*Purg.* xxx. 81);

for pity, like praise (as Arist. observes in *Nic. Eth.* I. xiii), implies the assumption of a sort of superiority on the part of him who offers it.

After this Dante enters the seventh Circle with its three *gironi*. In the first, where the Tyrants are punished, their sufferings are described without note or comment on the part of Dante. It is seldom that his narrative is so absolutely reticent and colourless in respect of the effect produced upon himself as it is here. The second *girone* is that of the Suicides and Spendthrifts. In regard to the former at any rate, while his condemnation is uncompromisingly severe (see xiii. 103–108), he chooses for his chief type a noble figure for whom he enlists our sympathies very strongly, and for whom he is himself overcome with pity so completely that speech fails

¹ ‘Limbo’) being so guarded, e. g. (2) Minos, (3) Cerberus, (4) Plutus, (5) Flegias, (6) Furies, (7) Minotaur, (8) Geryon, (9) the Giants. The propriety of the selection in most cases speaks for itself.

² We may recall here the remark of S. Aug. (*Enarr. in Ps.* cxxiv. § 5):

‘Non enim putetis, fratres, quia potuerunt fieri haereses per aliquas parvas animas. Non fecerunt haereses nisi magni homines.’ Cf. *supra*, p. 217.

³ On Dante’s treatment of heresy in Circle VI see previous Essay, pp. 176–180.

him, and he has to ask Virgil to continue the conversation for him :—

‘Ed io a lui, Domandal tu ancora
Di quel che credi che a me satisfaccia;
Ch’ io non potrei; tanta pietà m’ accora.’ (ll. 82-84.)

This was Pier delle Vigne, the great Chancellor of Frederic II, who committed suicide under the intolerable pressure of unmerited degradation, base ingratitude, and indeed barbarously cruel treatment on the part of his master; a master whom he had served, as he declares, with unswerving fidelity (ll. 62, 74), and against whom even now he does not utter a word of reproach, but speaks of him still as ‘mio signor, che fu d’onor sì degno’ (l. 75). He magnanimously lays the whole blame on the envious and jealous courtiers by whom the Emperor (Frederic II) had been misled (ll. 64-69). Of course, as in the case of Francesca, there is no sympathy with the sin against which the stern and irrevocable judgement is recorded. The inference we may draw is that there is nothing in the sin of suicide itself so odious as to extinguish pity, sympathy, or even respect, for the sinner, under certain circumstances or conditions¹. Many sins there are of course of which this cannot possibly be said; many cases there are (as we shall soon see) in which we hate the sinners, and can scarcely help doing so, as intensely as the sin itself. Certainly Dante himself does so, ‘yea he hates them right sore, even as though they were his enemies².’

We are more surprised to find in the third *girone*, where, among others, Sinners against Nature are punished, that Dante

¹ Dante’s very bold and exceptional treatment of Cato in the *Purgatorio*, and also in the *Convito*, is a still more striking illustration of this. It is singular that Dante lays special stress on the glory with which Cato’s body will be invested at the great Day in *Purg.* i. 74, 75, as though to contrast it with the ordinary fate of Suicides hereafter as it is proclaimed in *Inf.* xiii. 103-108.

² Dante has some excellent sentiments in *Conv.* IV. i. 35 *seqq.* on the necessity of drawing a distinction between the sinner and the sin. ‘As far as I could’ (he says) ‘I loathed and despised the errors of men, not to the infamy and reproach of the erring ones, but of the errors.’ No doubt he would say that this could not be carried out when the error was of a kind that altogether degraded and debased the sinner himself, since then that distinction could no longer be made.

retains the feelings not only of strong compassion, but even of respect and veneration for the Sinners. Moreover, not only does he retain such feelings, but he repeats and emphasizes the expression of them in a remarkable and quite exceptional manner. So much so that we feel tempted to remonstrate with him as Virgil does elsewhere—

‘Tu non hai fatto sì all’ altre bolge.’ (*Inf.* xxix. 7.)

The following references will justify and illustrate what I have said:—xv. 44, 45; 82 *seqq.*; 106–108; xvi. 12–18; 31–36; 46–60. It is remarkable that the same feeling reappears under similar circumstances in *Purg.* xxvi. 94–105. We must of course insist most strongly and clearly that all such feelings of tenderness or sympathy which Dante here expresses are for the sinners, not for the sin, for the sinners even in spite of the vileness of their sin. On the one hand we have among the sinners Brunetto Latini, for whom Dante feels singular veneration, affection and gratitude, as being in some sense (still disputed) his Master and Teacher; and we have there also some of the greatest names in politics, science and literature of his day, and not of his day alone: names to whose dignity and services Dante cannot but render respectful homage (see xv. 106, 107; xvi. 18, 31, 59)¹. On the other hand, we have the exceeding vileness of the sin, which all, and not the least Dante himself, must loathe and reprobate. Which emotion is to overpower the other? There must be a conflict of sentiments. Which shall have prominence in the artistic result? It is a question of feeling (in some sense we may say, of poetic feeling), not of morality, one of personal sentiment, not of moral judgement, on Dante’s part. His own decision at any rate is—

‘Non dispetto ma doglia
La vostra condizion dentro mi fisse’².

A modern writer would doubtless determine otherwise.

¹ As to the large number of these sinners Dante says in xiv. 25–27 that they formed a much more numerous band (‘quella che giva intorno’) than the blasphemers (‘quella che giaceva al tormento’). On which Scartazzini remarks, ‘Ecco la statistica dei tempi di Dante!’ Comp. *Inf.* xv. 105 and *Purg.* xxvi. 89, 90.

² *Inf.* xvi. 52, 53. Comp. also l. 12.

But it is a subject that scarcely admits of further discussion. The rest of this *girone* is occupied by the *Usurers*, who, according to mediaeval and indeed earlier notions¹, violate nature, or, as Dante puts it, art which is nature's child, by making money beget money. For them Dante has no sympathy, but only contempt. And this is shown, among other ways, in a manner with which he afterwards makes us very familiar in the lower Circles of Hell, viz. by the contemptuous character of his similes, and of his language generally. These sinners are always impatiently flicking off the fiery flakes by which they are tormented, just like dogs in summer when tormented by flies and fleas²:—

'Non altrimenti fan di state i cani,
Or col ceffo or coi piè, quando son morsi
O da pulci, o da mosche, o da tafani.' (xvii. 49-51.)

One of them makes a face at Dante and puts out his tongue at him like an ox when he licks his nose:—

'Qui distorse la bocca, e di fuor trasse
La lingua, come 'l bue che il naso lecchi.' (xvii. 74, 75.)

It is perhaps another indication of the same feeling that he makes these sinners (the Usurers) so changed and disfigured as to be unrecognizable, and with a savage irony he explains that he could only identify them by the handsome purses round their necks which were emblazoned with their armorial bearings, and on which their eyes were feasting:—

'Non ne conobbi alcun; ma io m' accorsi
Che dal collo a ciascun pendea una tasca,
Che avea certo colore e certo segno,
E quindi par che il loro occhio si pasca.' (xvii. 54-57.)

We see how completely Dante's personal feelings have changed in respect of sinners who are in one sense undergoing the same condemnation, and who are found on the same

¹ e. g., Arist. *Pol.* I. x. 5: ὁ δὲ τόκος γίνεται νόμισμα νομίματος ὥστε μάλιστα παρὰ φύσιν οὗτος τῶν χρηματισμῶν ἐστίν.

² Contrast with this the eager welcoming of the fiery punishment by the same sinners in Purgatory (xxvi. 13-15)—

'Poi verso me, quanto potevan farsi,
Certi si feron, sempre con riguardo
Di non uscir dove non fossero arsi.'

level in Hell, as those of whom we last spoke. It may be noted that twice before Dante has employed this mark of unrecognizability, as an expression, presumably, of his opinion that the sin in question was specially degrading. There is first the case of Ciaccio, punished for Gluttony¹ (see vi. 43-45); and next that of the Avaricious—a sin at least akin to that of Usury which we are now dealing with—see vii. 53, 54:—

‘La sconoscente vita che i fe’ sozzi
Ad ogni conoscenza or li fa bruni.’

Contrast with this Dante’s ready recognition of several of the Tyrants (xii. 123), and still more that of Brunetto Latini in spite of his ‘cotto aspetto’ and ‘viso abbruciato’ (xv. 26, 28).

After this Dante descends to the eighth Circle (‘Malebolge’), where Sin is punished that has been effected by Fraud, though without the further aggravation of the Fraud being practised upon those who have a special claim upon our fidelity or affection, which sin of deepest dye is reserved for Circle IX. As we might expect, the touches of contempt and expressions (and, later, even actions) of *ἕβρις* become more and more frequent. I will first collect together some scattered instances of this under the two heads that have been already indicated, viz.:—

- (1) Contemptuous similes.
- (2) Insulting words or phrases.

Among the former we note:—the comparison of the sinners in the seething pitch to lumps of meat in a caldron poked about with forks by a cook’s underlings to prevent their floating on the top:—

‘Non altrimenti i cuochi ai lor vassalli
Fanno attuffare in mezzo la caldaia
La carne cogli uncin, perchè non galli’ (xxi. 55-57):

¹ It is very remarkable that again in the *Purgatorio* this occurs, and that in the case of Dante’s own connexion and intimate friend Forese Donati, who is expiating the Sin of Gluttony. See *Purg.* xxiii. 43-45:—

‘Mai non l’ avrei riconosciuto al viso;
Ma nella voce sua mi fu palese
Ciò che nell’ aspetto in sé avea conquiso.’

Also the Avaricious are similarly unrecognizable even in Purgatory, as they are lying with their faces downward upon the earth. See *Purg.* xix. 72, 73, 84, 94, 115-126. See also *supra*, pp. 75, 76.

and by a similar metaphor the sufferers are described as stewing, 'i lessi dolenti' (l. 135). Again, we see the same sinners not daring to put more than their noses out like a number of frogs in a ditch, and then ducking under as soon as one of their tormentors is seen approaching—

'E come all' orlo dell' acqua d' un fosso
Stanno i ranocchi pur col muso fuori,
Sì che celano i piedi e l' altro grosso;
Sì stavan d' ogni parte i peccatori:
Ma come s' appressava Barbariccia,
Così si ritraen sotto i bollori' (xxii. 25-30);

one who has not been sharp enough at this manoeuvre is hooked out by the hair of his head like an otter from a pool—

'E trassel su, che mi parve una lontra' (xxii. 36);

another becomes the sport of the tormenting demons like a mouse among cats—

'Tra male gatte era venuto il sorco' (xxii. 58).

We may add the mocking jest in xviii. 51, the point of which is missed in many modern commentaries and translations, and indeed it cannot be represented by any simple rendering of the words. Dante meets the Bolognese Caccianimico in the Bolgia of the Panders, who are being ferociously whipped by Demons. And he asks him, 'Ma che ti mena a sì pungenti salse?' (or, as I think it is better to print it, 'Salse'). Now the 'Salse' was the place of public execution near Bologna, where also minor criminals were whipped by the public executioner, just as was the case some generations back at Tyburn among ourselves. So he asks this Bolognese victim—'What brought you to this Salse and such a stinging one?' But *salse* also means sauce or pickle, so that the words would at the same time convey to his ear the meaning, 'What brought you into this *pickle*, and such a sharp one too¹?'

Another feature or medium of this *ῥῆσις* is found in coarse, comic, and even slang expressions and downright 'vulgarisms,' which to our ideas are often sorely inconsistent with the conventional dignity of poetry. Dante probably

¹ Similarly 'Bulicame,' which occurs as the name of a place in *Inf.* xiv. 79, is used as a general term in xii. 117 and 128.

would have resented this phrase, as a well-known modern divine said that he hated to hear of 'the dignity of the pulpit,' this being often an excuse for dullness. Dante in any case cared nothing for such conventionalities, and if any word or phrase or comparison expressed quite definitely and unmistakably the idea or feeling which was present to him, he did not hesitate to adopt it without any *arrière-pensée* as to 'proprieties,' 'conventionalities,' 'rules of art,' or any similar considerations by which inferior or more timid and self-conscious artists are hampered¹. It is often quite true, as Aristotle (*Poetics*, c. xxiv. § 10) says of similar liberties on the part of Homer, 'they would be intolerable in the hands of an inferior artist.' Observe how such phrases as the following evince his unutterable contempt, even more than any studied and formal expression of it could have done. As he says himself, 'parole non ci appulcra' (*Inf.* vii. 60).

Of the panders in the first Bolgia, when lashed by the horned demons, he says, 'Ah! how they made them kick up their heels ('*levar le berze*,' xviii. 37) at the first stroke of the whip: no one ever waited for a second or for a third.' In Cantos xviii. 104 and xxii. 106, in referring both to the devils and their victims, he contemptuously uses *muso*, the 'muzzle' or 'snout,' for the mouth or face, a term strictly applicable only to the lower animals². So also the word *sbuffa* in l. 104, 'snorting,' as a pig does when grubbing with his snout in the dirt. So in xviii. 124 he speaks of the flatterer Alessio Interminci as 'beating his noddle' or '*pumpkin*' ('*battendosi la zucca*'); for this is the meaning of the word *zucca*, which is used here instead of *capo*. Observe again, *epa*, 'the paunch,' in xxv. 82, and xxx. 102, 119; and *grifo*, 'the snout,' applied to Centaurs. So in xxi. 101, 102 a demon asks another respecting one of their victims, 'Shall I touch him on the crupper (*groppone*)?' Yes, is the reply, 'see that you nick or notch it for him' (*accocchi*). In xxii. 150 'Ch'eran già

¹ See Supplementary Note I. at the end of this Essay.

² As e. g. of frogs, *Inf.* xxii. 26, xxxii. 32; of sheep, *Purg.* iii. 81; and of serpents, *Inf.* xxv. 130. Also note the contemptuous use of the word in the very bitter passage respecting the course of the Arno in *Purg.* xiv. 48, 'Ed a lor, disdegnosa, torce il muso.'

cotti dentro dalla crosta,' one (though not quite a certain, yet I think the most probable) explanation of *crosta* is their 'crust,' used derisively in the sense of their 'skin'; i. e. the two devils plunged into the boiling pitch were 'already cooked through inside their crust.' Note once more the downright vulgarism, *grattar la tigna* (xxii. 93), i. e. 'I fear he is preparing himself to scratch my hide, or more literally my itch, for me.' So again in l. 83 it seems most probable that *di piano* is a vulgar Sardinian provincialism put into the mouth of the Sardinian 'frate Gomita,' and it is something like 'glib' or 'slick,' and in that case *Sì come ei dice* is contemptuously and apologetically added in the sense of 'to use his own phrase,' i. e. 'in his own vulgar slang¹.' We may note also the disgusting details of the punishment in the second Bolgia (xviii. 112-117); the surprising coarseness of the contemptuous signal for march of the captain of the diabolic escort in xxi. 138, 139; and the vulgar gesture of 'le fiche,' attributed to Vanni Fucci, in xxv. 2.

It will be seen that many of these symptoms of scorn and contempt occur in Cantos xxi and xxii, where the sin of *baratteria* is treated of at unusual length, and (for reasons to be explained frequently) with exceptional bitterness. But between this and the eighteenth Canto (which we were last considering) comes a very remarkable scene in which Dante expresses his scorn and indignation fully as keenly, if not more so, but in a very different manner. In Canto xix the fierce outbreak against the Simoniacal Popes and Nicolas III (the Orsini) in particular, together with the tremendous backhanded strokes against Boniface VIII and Clement V, very ingeniously introduced under the guise of prophecy (they being still alive in 1300, and Clement indeed not even yet Pope), glowing white-hot in every line with fiery indignation and bitter irony, is an example of *ὕβρις* in

¹ It is probably with somewhat the same feeling that Dr. Newman in the *Dream of Gerontius* surprises us by making the chorus of Demons describe themselves as

'Aside thrust, *chucked down*
By the sheer might
Of a despot's will.'

the best and most dignified sense of the term. He first, as it were, plays with his victim, teases him as a cat would a mouse (to borrow his own simile in *xxii.* 58) by putting in his mouth a semi-comic and punning reference to the Orsini's care for the bear-cubs having caused him to put money in his pouch in the world above and himself into a pouch in the world below. This is in allusion to the hole in which he was placed :—

‘E veramente fui figliuol dell’ orsa¹,
Cupido sì per avanzar gli orsatti,
Che su l’ avere, e qui me misi in borsa.’ (*xix.* 70-72.)

But he soon turns upon him in tremendous earnest. What can surpass the sarcasm of this?—‘Tell me now how much our Lord asked at first from S. Peter that he should entrust him with the keys? . . . There was no silver or gold demanded from Matthias by Peter and the rest for his election’ (*ll.* 90-96). Or the fierce irony of this, addressed to the tormented spirit:—‘Keep a good hold of the ill-gotten money that made thee so bold against Charles’ (*ll.* 97-99). Imagine even so meritorious an act (in Dante’s eyes) as resistance to Charles of Anjou being cast in the teeth of Nicolas! Not even the excellence of the end shall palliate, much less excuse, the baseness of the means employed². If so, how great was that baseness! And then Dante adds that it is only reverence for the sacred office which Nicolas held that restrains him from using yet severer language :—

‘E se non fosse, che ancor lo mi vieta
La riverenza delle somme chiavi,
Che tu tenesti nella vita lieta,
I’ userei parole ancor più gravi.’ (*xix.* 100-103.)

More violent, more abusive, words he might have found, but

¹ Gregorovius (without any reference to this passage) states that the family of Orsini was commonly described as ‘*filiū Ursi*’ in old annalists (*op. cit.* v. p. 40 n.).

² i.e. according to the usual explanation, the bribes received from John of Procida. But since, as Scartazzini points out, his boldness against Charles was of earlier date, the reference may be to the wealth acquired by the plunder of the Church. Another, if not stronger, motive for this antagonism was the contemptuous rejection by Charles of the Pope’s proposal that the son of Charles should marry the Pope’s niece.

not indeed severer (*più gravi*), for the stern dignity and sense of measured self-control pervading this tremendous denunciation constitute its almost unparalleled severity. The only other passage we can set beside it is the fiery outburst of S. Peter against the depravity of the Popes, in *Par.* xxvii, which casts a lurid gloom over the brightness of Paradise itself.

It should be noticed that there are several small details in this Canto which betray the same mocking spirit. The victims, whose legs are writhing with torment, are described as 'lamenting with their shanks,' 'che sì piangeva con la zanca' (l. 45): for *zanca* is given in the best dictionaries as a colloquial Florentinism for legs (*gambe*). Compare its use in *Inf.* xxxiv. 79 among other contemptuous expressions applied to Lucifer. Observe also the mockery with which the victim (Nicolas III), though his personality is still unknown, is in the first instance addressed. 'Whoever thou art, that art turned upside down, planted like a stake, speak a word if thou canst' (ll. 46-48). Throughout the Canto there seems a sort of running parody on the keynote of *vice versa* or topsy-turvy¹. The bride of Christ, being made venal, has been treated like an adulteress (see ll. 3, 4, and comp. ll. 106-108). The priests in the beautiful Baptistery of S. John stand ministering in the circular stations provided for them. These false priests have just similar receptacles, neither larger nor smaller,

'Non mi parean meno ampi nè maggiori' (l. 16),

in which they stand, but head downwards. The Saints above have an aureole of glory upon their *heads*; these similarly eminent denizens of Hell (these infernal Saints, if I may use such a phrase) have their *feet* surrounded by lambent fire, and so, as we may say, bear upon the soles of their feet this mock aureole of their shame and torment. Further, their greater pre-eminence in Sin is marked by a brighter flame (see l. 33), even as in Paradise they advance 'from glory to glory' with higher grades of sanctity.

¹ This is suggested, I think, somewhere by Scartazzini.

In Canto xx we meet once more with an outburst of compassion on Dante's part (see ll. 19-30). It is noticeable in two or three respects. First, it is at once pitilessly repressed and sternly rebuked by Virgil in the well-known lines 28-30:—

'Qui vive la pietà quando è ben morta.
Chi è più scellerato che colui
Che al giudizjo divin passion porta?'

This has never been the case before. Secondly, it is, I believe, the last occasion on which any such feeling is manifested by Dante, with one slight exception in Canto xxix, when he is somewhat moved by the sufferings of a vast number of victims, including a relative of his own:—

'La molta gente e le diverse piaghe
Avean le luci mie sì inebriate
Che dello stare a piangere eran vaghe' (xxix. 1-3);

and

'Credo che un spirto del mio sangue pianga
La colpa che laggiù cotanto costa' (xxix. 20, 21);

but Virgil once more represses the feeling with unusual bluntness:—

'Allor disse il Maestro: Non si franga
Lo tuo pensier da qui innanzi sopr' ello,
Attendi ad altro, ed ei là si rimanga' (ll. 22-24).

Lastly, the emotion described in this Canto (xx) is precisely that which Aristotle (*Poetics*, c. xiii. § 2) indicates, as has been already noted, by *φιλανθρωπία*, i.e. the fellow-feeling inevitably excited by the sight of acute human suffering in itself, which need not amount to pity (*ἔλεος*) if that suffering is known to be merited. This seems to be exactly what Dante describes in xx. ll. 20 *seqq.*:

'pensa per te stesso
Com' io potea tener lo viso asciutto,
Quando la nostra imagine da presso
Vidi sì torta,' &c.

But in Cantos xxi and xxii, more than in any others before or after, Dante allows the spirit of *ὑβρις* to run riot in its

most grotesque and extravagant forms. This is the circle in which the *Barattieri* are punished, those who have abused to their own ends the possession of public offices, the very charge (observe) on which Dante was himself unjustly condemned and cruelly banished. The similes throughout are derived from the most commonplace and contemptible objects (see *supra*, p. 224); slang words or vulgar expressions are freely employed in the exuberance of contemptuous mockery; some of the details are too coarse and disgusting to quote in illustration; the incidents even of the tortures of the condemned spirits are comic and grotesque; and the scene closes with a piece of burlesque horseplay, in which the demons themselves are outwitted by one of their victims, and are left struggling in the pitch, Virgil and Dante taking advantage of the general confusion to make good, though without a moment to spare, their escape into the next Bolgia (cf. xxiii. 34-54). But perhaps the most extraordinary feature in this strange episode would be that the whole scene, if the ingenious suggestion of Gabriel Rossetti be accepted, appears to be a sort of infernal parody of a disaster which occurred at Florence on May 1, 1303, on the occasion of a singular entertainment got up in honour of the Cardinal da Prato, who was sent to Florence as a peacemaker by the weak but well-meaning Benedict XI¹. This entertainment or pageant is described at length in the Chronicle of G. Villani (viii. 70) and others². There was a representation of the Inferno with demons horrible to behold, and naked spirits tortured and insulted by them, and among these forms of torture are particularly mentioned by one author³

¹ This is G. Villani's judgement of him (Cron. viii. 80):—'Questi fu buono uomo, e onesto e giusto, e di santa e religiosa vita, e avea voglia di fare ogni bene.' It is remarkable that there is no allusion whatever to him in Dante, though he came between Boniface VIII and Clement V, and though he intervened in Florentine affairs at a period so critical for Dante.

² In the Chronicle attributed to Dino Compagni, there is no mention of this scene, though the Cardinal's mission to Florence is described at considerable length. I have here and elsewhere used the guarded expression 'the Chronicle attributed to Dino Compagni,' but I believe it is thought that Prof. Del Lungo has successfully vindicated its genuineness.

³ Viz. Stefani, quoted by Rossetti, *Com. Anal.* ii. p. 159.

caldrons of *boiling water and pitch*. The Ponte alla Carraia, packed with an excited crowd, suddenly gave way, and many fell into the water and were drowned, and thus, as one chronicler dryly puts it, they quickly discovered what Hell itself was like; or, as another grimly observes, 'the sportive representations soon became a reality to them ¹.'

Further, Rossetti maintains that the names of the demons so carefully enumerated by Dante (see xxi. 105, 118 *seqq.*) are simply caricatured from those of the gonfaloniere, priors, &c., then in authority in Florence, who were consequently among Dante's bitterest political enemies². Now it must certainly be observed that these names in Dante are (1) not traditional, like those of Milton, for example; (2) not obviously significant (except perhaps in one or two cases, such as Malebranche and Malacoda), like, for instance, the jurymen at *Vanity Fair*, and other such-like characters in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*; (3) not even (with some possible exceptions) repulsive or offensive in form or sound; some indeed are entirely euphonious, e.g. Calcabrina, Farfarello, Alichino. Why then, we naturally ask, is Dante so careful to give us this complete list of *prima facie* unmeaning names? We may be quite sure it was not purposeless. Nothing is purposeless in Dante, certainly nothing which is thus carefully elaborated and emphasized. I must say I cannot imagine any more likely explanation than that suggested by Rossetti, and if we find nearly half of these names still at this interval of more than five centuries, in spite of their obscurity, and in spite of the very various and fanciful devices by which

¹ The old chroniclers and commentators evidently thought this a very good joke, for it appears again in Benvenuto, who describes this accident at length (vol. ii. pp. 262, 263) and concludes thus: 'ita quod ludus fictus conversus est in rem veram. Nam multi qui spectabant infernum simulatum, iverunt ad infernum verum, et "sciverunt nova de alio mundo," juxta proclamationem banni.' The allusion in the last clause is to the public announcement of the coming entertainment, which ran thus according to G. Villani:—'Chi volesse sapere novelle dell' altro mondo dovesse essere in di di calen di Maggio in sul ponte alla Carraia e d' intorno all' Arno.'

² One is tempted to ask whether any similar explanation has been, or might be, suggested for the fancy names given by Aristophanes in the *Frogs* to the three infernal constables of Aeacus—

ὁ Διτύλας, ὁ Σκεβλίης, ὁ Παρδόκας (l. 608).

such travesties may be effected, lending themselves pretty easily to some such explanation, the inference that such an explanation is the true one becomes almost irresistible.

For we must bear in mind (1) that the persons whose names are supposed to be thus travestied are obscure and almost entirely unknown (except for some passing reference in contemporary archives or chroniclers), as much so as one is reluctantly compelled to believe that even the names of some of our own local mayors and aldermen (in spite of their longer tenure of dignity than the paltry two months of Florentine authority) are likely to be to those

‘Che questo tempo chiameranno antico.’ (*Par.* xvii. 120.)

Further, (2) that we have only an incomplete list of those who bore office at that time, so that some of those who may be referred to cannot now be traced at all. Again, (3) that the ways in which such travesties are effected are very numerous and often subtle. It may be by a transposition of some letters or sounds; it may be by a reference to some (unrecorded) peculiarity of feature, manner, or gait, as possibly in the case of Ciriatto ‘*sannuto*’; it may be by the substitution of a quasi-synonym now unrecognizable (just as Justice Stareleigh in *Pickwick* is supposed to represent the name ‘Gazelee’); it may be by some sort of anagram, or in a score of other ways, which fancy or ingenuity may suggest, as in the familiar case of ‘nicknames’ generally. And so it might well result that, in spite of its present obscurity, the whole travesty might have been transparently obvious and irresistibly telling when the names and incidents were fresh in men’s minds. It would take us too long to argue out this plausible and tempting theory. I will only borrow from Rossetti a few of the most striking points in illustration. Among the names of magistrates still traceable are found—Manno Branco, Rafficani, Aliotto, Pazzin dei Pazzi, Jacopo Ricci. There is surely a suspicious similarity to be found in Malebranche, Graffiaccane, Alichino, Rubicante *pazzo*, Barbariccia, without falling back on the various other devices which have been suggested for the purpose of such parodies,

many of which must be now *ex hypothesi* untraceable. Then, besides other minor incidents in detail suggested by Rossetti (which no doubt vary considerably in plausibility), note the repeated and emphatic reference to the *ponte* throughout the twenty-first Canto, the *spezzato arco* in l. 108, and the *sasso rotto* in xxiii. 136. The number of the devils here is twelve, which was, according to Rossetti, the number of the 'Sindaci Neri' (comp. 'diavol nero,' l. 29) elected to treat with the Cardinal, and twelve was also the number of the Priors. In xxii. 38 we have perhaps a reference to the election in question, where Dante says of the names of the devils,

'Si li notai quando furono eletti.'

Above all there is of course the concluding scene of the involuntary immersion of the demons, which may refer (as Rossetti suggests), not only to the actual circumstances of the casualty at Florence, but also to the fact that after the departure of the Cardinal the leaders of the Neri fell to quarrelling with one another. The following considerations are worth notice before we pass on. (1) In extenuation of such an outbreak on the part of Dante against his so-called 'political opponents,' it should be remembered what 'political' enmity then meant. The issue between Whites and Blacks was not like that between Whigs and Tories, or between Government and Opposition. It was a question of life and death for the vanquished, and for Dante himself it meant exile, confiscation of goods, and condemnation, if caught, to be burnt alive ('igne comburatur sic quod moriatur'). (2) The *religious* principle involved in so-called political differences, according to the view of Dante, is to be borne in mind (this has been fully explained in the first Essay of this volume). (3) Finally, as we have noted above, the sin punished in this particular Bolgia was *Baratteria*, i.e. malversation of a public office or trust, which may perhaps be described as a sort of secular 'simony' scarcely less odious in Dante's eyes than its spiritual counterpart. This was precisely the false accusation for which he suffered. In this way perhaps

therefore he shows his loathing and contempt for such conduct, his fiery indignation that his name should ever have been associated with it, his bitter sense of the shipwreck of his life and all his hopes which resulted therefrom¹.

In the next *Bolgia*, that of the Hypocrites, an expression which looks as if it might perhaps have betrayed some admission of pity² is ingeniously cut short by the sudden appearance of the crucified or impaled figure of Caiaphas in their path:—

‘Io cominciai, O frati, i vostri mali . . .
Ma più non dissi: che all’ occhio mi corse
Un, crocifisso in terra con tre pali.’ (xxiii. 109–111.)

The Robbers in the seventh *Bolgia* are depicted as insolent, malicious, and coarse in their acts and language: e.g. xxiv. 140–151; xxv. 1–3. Dante gloats over their tortures by the serpents, and their ignominious interchange of form with those reptiles. This is described with great minuteness and numerous touches of contempt in the details of the language, and in the comparisons employed. After hearing the blasphemy of Vanni Fucci, Dante exclaims—

‘Da indi in qua mi fur le serpi amiche.’ (xxv. 4.)

In the eighth *Bolgia*, where Evil Counsellors are punished, Dante’s tone changes, not indeed from any sympathy with the sin, but because it is not incompatible with dignity of character and great merits in other respects. Indeed the possibility of giving effect to such a sin implies the possession of some acknowledged intellectual superiority, or commanding position. There is almost a flicker from the dead embers of compassion in xxvi. 19, ‘Allor mi dolsi ed ora mi ridoglio,’

¹ Rossetti observes that Dante purposely represents himself as requiring special protection, and as being subject to special alarm for his own safety in this *Bolgia*, e.g. xxi. 23, 24; 58–60; 88–102; 128–132. Also that his escape is only secured at last by precipitate flight and special aid from Virgil. See xxiii. 37–54.

² This is sometimes differently, but, as I venture to think, not so well, explained as the commencement of a denunciation, *mali* being then taken in a moral, and not a physical sense. But the tone of the words, so far as they go, seems to me to tend rather towards an expression of sympathy, and *mali* also to be much more naturally taken in the physical sense.

but when we look closely at the following lines it appears that Dante means no more than this: the recollection of the terrible results of the abuse of special intellectual gifts still gives him pain, and acts further as a solemn warning to himself to be on his guard against such a danger. It is not therefore a feeling so much of personal compassion for the victims as of that 'φόβος περὶ τὸν ὅμοιον' which is described by Aristotle in the *Poetics*, c. xiii. When we remember that these sinners are represented by such heroic types as Ulysses and Diomede and afterwards Guido da Montefeltro (held up in the *Convito* as an example of all that was most noble in contemporary life¹), Dante certainly is not likely to exult over them², nor will he presume to commiserate them after the rebuke he has received from Virgil in the fourth Bolgia, Canto xx. 28-30. There is something very significant in the absolute reticence of Cantos xxvi and xxvii, in respect of any expression whatever of feelings on Dante's part³, and something, as we may say, almost startling in the abrupt termination both of the episode of Ulysses (xxvi. 142) and that of Guido da Montefeltro (xxvii. 133). Observe also that there is nothing repulsive in the form or details of the punishment in this Bolgia. Contrast those of the previous and succeeding Bolge in this respect.

In the Bolgia of the Schismatics (the ninth), and that of the Alchemists, Forgers, and Deceivers⁴ (tenth), Dante's contempt and disgust are visible in almost every line, and every form and device in which ὕβρις can be manifested is resorted to. The punishments are of a most loathsome kind, and every offensive detail is emphasized by minute description, not without occasional coarseness (as we have seen before),

¹ In *Conv.* IV. xxviii, Dante speaks of him as 'il nobilissimo nostro Latino Guido Montefeltrano,' and Dino Compagni when mentioning him adds, 'di cui la graziosa fama al mondo vola' (pp. 132, 133, ed. Barbèra).

² Compare what was said of the Heresiarchs, *supra*, p. 220.

³ A similar reticence was noted (*supra*, p. 220) in respect of the great Tyrants in the seventh Circle.

⁴ The word is *Falsatori*, i.e. Deceivers who have as it were falsified themselves by personation of others, or by concealing their own identity, just as forgers have falsified money.

and with pitiless mockery: e.g. xxviii. 19-27; 64-69; 103-105; 121-125; xxix. 50, 67-72; 82-84; xxx. 29, 30; 49-57. The sinners are represented as infuriated with degrading and impotent passions, rage, hatred, spite, malice, and so forth: e.g. xxviii. 94-96; xxx. 29-33; 76-87; 102-105. This culminates in an extraordinary scene of undignified banter and mutual recrimination between two wretched condemned spirits, 109-129, which descends at last to something like downright 'Billingsgate' in ll. 122, 123, and 128, 129; especially in the latter passage where one spirit taunts the other who is consumed with burning thirst, 'You would not need any pressing invitation to induce you to lick Narcissus' looking-glass'; i.e., of course, to take a drink of water! It is all so vile that Virgil sharply rebukes Dante for having demeaned himself by even listening to it—

'Quando il Maestro mi disse: "Or pur mira
Che per poco è che teco non mi risso"' (xxx. 131, 132);

and—

'Chè voler ciò udire è bassa voglla' (l. 148).

We have again (as occasionally before) contemptuous similes, such as xxix. 73, 74—

'Io vidi due sedere a sè poggiati,
Come a scaldar si poggia tegghia a tegghia';

i.e. two sinners leaning against one another are compared to a couple of tiles (*al.* baking pans) set up to dry. We cannot help contrasting the very different language in which exactly the same condition or posture is described in *Purg.* xiii. 59, 'E l' un sofferia l' altro con la spalla,' such an action being in direct contrast to the sin of Envy which these sinners are expiating. Again, in xxix. 76-78, they are represented as scratching themselves so vigorously on account of the furious itching by which they are tormented that Dante says he never saw a stable boy grooming a horse with such energy while his master is waiting!

'E non vidi giammai menare stregghia
Da ragazzo aspettato dal signorso.'

So again, in xxx. 25-27, one spirit rushes at another to bite him with fury like that of a pig when he is let out of his styel

'Quant' io vidi in due ombre smorte e nude,
Che mordendo correvan di quel modo
Che il porco quando del porcil si schiude.'

Finally, notice the astonishing *ὕβρις* of the form of adjuration put into the mouth of Virgil in xxix. 89, 90: 'Tell us if any Italian is here with you, and so *may your nails never fail you* at their work (of scratching) to all eternity!'

'se l' unghia ti basti
Eternalmente a cotesto lavoro.'

(Compare a somewhat similar passage in xxx. 34-36.) Dante seems here already to have employed every device by which the most utter contempt and disgust can be expressed, though we shall presently see that his resources are not even yet exhausted. In the last and lowest circle of Hell, where Traitors, who have betrayed their relations, their country, their friends, or their benefactors, are punished in the divisions denominated Caina, Antenora, Tolomea, and Giudecca respectively, we have the same 'ira bestial' among the condemned souls¹. Thus in xxxii. 50 two are represented as butting their heads together like goats:

'come due becchi
Cozzaro insieme: tant' ira li vinse.'

The horrible gnawing of Archbishop Ruggieri's skull by

¹ It should be observed that the exhibition of this 'ira bestial' here and elsewhere has a deep moral significance. Sin unrestrained and triumphant is the fittest punishment of Sin. This is clearly expressed by Dante in *Inf.* xiv. 63-66:—

'O Capaneo, in ciò che non s' ammorza
La tua superbia, se' tu più punito:
Nullo martirio, fuor che la tua rabbia,
Sarebbe al tuo furor dolor compito.'

Compare Coleridge (*The Pains of Sleep*):—

'Such punishments, I said, were due
To natures deepliest stained with sin,
For aye entempesting anew
The unfathomable hell within
The horror of their deeds to view,
To know and loathe, and yet to do.'

Ugolino is too familiar to need special quotation (see xxxii. 133, 134; xxxiii. 1-3; 76-78). Also note the fiendish malice with which Bocca degli Abati, having been discovered himself, tells the names of several of his companions (xxxii. 112 *seqq.*)¹, since all alike in this depth of infamy desire above all things to remain unknown and to be left to oblivion (see xxxii. 91-95)—a striking contrast to the wish of those in the earlier Circles of Hell. Further than this, Ugolino welcomes even an addition to his own sufferings if he can thereby increase the infamy of his enemy Ruggieri—

‘Ma se le mie parole esser den seme
Che frutti infamia al traditor ch’ io rodo,
Parlare e lagrimar vedrai insieme.’ (xxxiii. 7-9.)

But, besides these indications of scorn and contempt which we have met with before, there is, if I am not mistaken, one new feature, viz. that in this last Circle Dante for the first time *takes upon himself* to taunt and insult the condemned, i. e. he attributes to himself personally the language and actions by which their sufferings are mocked or aggravated². When as

¹ As minor details we may note that the expression ‘*piange l’argento de’ Franceschi*’ is generally thought to carry a sting in the adoption of the semi-French term ‘l’argento.’ Also the unhappy victims embedded in the ice are contemptuously described as ‘stuck in jelly’ (‘*fitta in gelatina*’); and in line 117 the expression ‘*stanno freschi*’ is probably in a mocking double sense (as in colloquial Italian) something like the play upon ‘*salse*’ in *Inf.* xviii. 51, already referred to. It may further be noted that in these two lower Circles alone the sinners are tormented by demons. In the Circles above the torment is limited to the external circumstances or conditions in which they are placed. The Centaurs in Canto xii are not an exception to this. They are the guardians or ‘police’ of the *girone* of the Tyrants (*supra*, p. 219). They do not interfere except in the case of attempted evasion of the allotted punishment. See xii. 74. 75.

² Dante’s treatment of Nicolas III in Canto xix is not really an exception to this. He himself *preaches* to him, it is true, and, in language of the utmost severity, ‘*facit indignatio versum*’; but he is still held in check by the ‘*riverenza delle somme chiavi*’; there is no gratuitous insult, nothing approaching to ribaldry; he never goes a step beyond what he believes to be ‘*lo suon delle parole vere espresse*’ (l. 123). No attentive reader can fail to see the vast difference between Dante’s conduct and language there and in the scenes about to be described. Even the mockery to which I have called attention (p. 229), so far as it is put in Dante’s own mouth, occurs before he knows the name or position of the victim, when Dante might plead like S. Paul, ‘I wist not, brethren, that he was the High Priest,’ and when his indignation breaks out after this

he walks along he kicks a head embedded in the ice beneath his feet (that of Bocca degli Abati), there is a marked absence of the slightest expression of regret, and he even suggests that this may have been so 'ordered':—

'Se voler fu, o destino, o fortuna,
Non so: ma passeggiando tra le teste,
Forte percossi il piè nel viso ad una.' (xxxii. 76-78.)

(Contrast with this the scene in Canto xiii, when he involuntarily wounds Piero delle Vigne.) But further than this, in this case of Bocca degli Abati (whose treachery brought about the disaster of Monte Aperti, see x. 85; xxxii. 81), when he refuses to reveal his name, Dante threatens to pull out every hair in his head, and did in fact tear out several handfuls, the sinner 'barking'¹ at him all the time (xxxii. 105, 108), before his name was accidentally revealed by one of his companions. We must describe a little more at length Dante's brutal and insulting treatment of the vile traitor Frate Alberigo, which is indeed the crowning outburst of the most pitiless *v̄βp̄is* to be found throughout the poem. Dante first extracts from him the unwelcome confession of his name by (apparently) promising that he will in return give him temporary relief from his sufferings by removing the crust of ice with which his eyes are fast bound. He further confirms this promise by what seems a most tremendous, though under his peculiar circumstances a wholly unmeaning, imprecation. 'If I do not relieve you may I myself descend to the very lowest hell' (see xxxiii. 112-117). This of course he was about to do in any case, though in a sense which could not be suspected by his victim². Thus is the traitor worthily entrapped by treachery like his own. 'Happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us,' might well occur to Dante in

discovery it is accompanied by the apologetic words, 'Io non so s' io mi fui qui troppo folle' (l. 88).

¹ There are two other places where Dante employs this expression contemptuously, viz. *Par.* vi. 74 and *Conv.* IV. iii. 59. Cf. *τοιαῦθ' ἔλακτεῖ* (said by Electra of Clytemnestra) in *Soph. El.* 299.

² See xxxiii. 112-117; and compare the very similar language in which the same fact is stated with no such *arrière-pensée* in *Inf.* xvi. 63.

In such a case, then, friends, there is no room for moderation or for reason; in such the stress of ill leaves no choice but to follow wil ways (Jebb)

DANTE'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS SINS 241

justification. We might also compare in illustration, 'With the froward thou shalt learn frowardness'; or again, the palliation pleaded by Electra in Soph. *El.* 307-309:—

ἐν οὖν τοιούτοις οὔτε σωφρονεῖν, φίλοι,
οὔτ' εὐσεβεῖν πάρεστιν· ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς
πολλή γ' ἀνάγκη κάπιτηδεύειν κακά.

The victim, encouraged by the prospect of the relief thus assured to him, becomes further communicative on his own account (see ll. 127 *seqq.*). When Dante first heard his name he remarked with surprise that he supposed Frate Alberigo to be still alive. Observe the unique and astounding device to which Dante here has recourse in order to gibbet in Hell this still living traitor without inconsistency with the assumed date of his poem, 1300. Observe, too, the refinement of irony with which he puts this surprising information, which he affects to regard as incredible ('Io credo, dissì lui, che tu m' inganni,' l. 139), in the mouth of the victim himself. The statement made is that in the case of the worst kinds of treachery, such as the speaker had been guilty of (l. 130), the soul of the traitor is at once plunged into the torments of hell, while his body is still living on earth, and is thenceforth tenanted, till his time comes (l. 132), which may not be for many years (l. 137), by an indwelling devil in place of its former personality; a change wholly unsuspected by those among whom he lives and moves as before (see ll. 129-138). He tells Dante, moreover, of another case of a like kind, viz. Ser Branca d' Oria. Note here the concentrated venom of Dante's reply—'Surely you are deceiving me. Ser Branca d' Oria is not dead yet¹. He still eats and drinks *and sleeps and puts on clothes!*'

'Io credo, diss' io lui, che tu m' inganni;
Chè Branca d' Oria non morì unquanche,
E mangia e bee e dorme e veste panni.' (ll. 139-141.)

Such is his sarcastic summary of 'the life which he lives in the

¹ It is stated in the Chronicle attributed to Dino Compagni, bk. iii (p. 206. ed. Barbéra), that he was in command at Genoa on Oct. 21, 1311, when Henry VII entered, but this was really his son Barnabò (see Toynbee *Dict.* p. 95).

flesh¹! All the desired information, and even much more than was expected or bargained for, being now freely given, the traitor spirit demands the promised recompense. One almost shudders at the blunt and disdainful curtness of Dante's language, and at the exuberance of *ὕβρις* manifested both in his act and in his narration of it. "But now reach forth thy hand: open me mine eyes." And I did not open them. And it was courtesy to be churlish to him.'

' Ma distendi oramai in qua la mano,
 Aprimi gli occhi: ed io non gli ele apersi,
 E cortesia fu in lui-esser villano.' (ll. 148-150.)

The effect of this unparalleled scene would be weakened by any comment of mine.

Only one remark in conclusion. To many people Dante is perhaps still known only as the author of the *Inferno*, and to this division of his great work our attention has here been limited. But those who are familiar with the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* (to say nothing of the *Vita Nuova*) are aware that there was in him also a feminine gentleness and tenderness of feeling no less remarkable than his tremendous force. The contrast is as striking and the combination as real as in the nature of him who was both Boanerges, a son of thunder, and also the Apostle of Love. This must never be forgotten, especially when, as in the present discussion, circumstances require one to emphasize, and indeed we may almost say, to isolate, the sterner side of his character. Under different conditions it would be easy to show that the other aspect of his character is quite as real and quite as striking as that which we have now been called upon almost exclusively to delineate.

We must also guard against the shallow error of limiting the stern language of Dante to the expression of personal feeling. Mr. Ruskin is even so bold as to say that it is only 'shallow people who think Dante stern' (*M. P.* iii. p. 164).

¹ A curious parallel occurs in a saying of Archbishop Whately, who was probably unacquainted with this passage. Regretting the premature death of a young and energetic parish priest, he said, 'His predecessor ate, drank, and slept here for forty years.'

In this and other respects Dante is like a Hebrew prophet¹. The experiences he records as though they were his own are those of mankind generally; the condemnation he pronounces is that of humanity at large, under circumstances in which it would not be too much to say that 'Vox populi' is 'Vox Dei.' The 'allegorical and true'² subject of the *Commedia* is declared by Dante himself to be, '*homo*, prout merendo et demerendo per arbitrii libertatem Iustitiae praemianti aut punienti obnoxius est'³. The representative character of Dante in his great work would be well described in the words of Browning:—

'I for my race and me
Shall apprehend life's law:
In the legend of man shall see
Writ large what small I saw
In my life's tale: both agree.

As the record from yorth to age
Of my own, the single soul—
So the world's wide book: one page
Deciphered explains the whole
Of our common heritage'⁴.

Or again, as Tennyson said in reference to *In Memoriam*—
"I" is not always the author speaking of himself, but the voice of the human race speaking through him⁵.

¹ See Essay i. p. 34.

² These are Dante's own words in *Conv.* II. xiii. *init.*

³ *Ep.* X. § viii. ll. 173-175.

⁴ *Reverie*, ll. 26 *seqq.*

⁵ *Life*, i. p. 305.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE I

IT is worth while to consider in connexion with such passages as I have been discussing certain others where Dante 'uses great plainness of speech,' which jars upon our ideas of poetic taste. In these cases there is no question of *ὑβρις* or contempt, but the extreme plainness and homeliness of speech is due to Dante's intense realization of details, and his directness in setting down whatever most precisely and concisely will convey the same definite ideas to his readers. My meaning would be illustrated by such passages as *Par.* xvii. 129, where Cacciaguida bids Dante be fearless in setting forth all that he has seen and heard, and 'let those that itch scratch.' Again, in the highest Circle of Paradise S. Bernard stops his description of the Saints in the heavenly Court by saying that 'like a good tailor he must cut his coat according to his cloth' (*Par.* xxxii. 140-141). In answer to Dante's inquiry how long it was after their creation before the Evil Angels fell, Beatrice informs him that it was 'before you could count twenty' (*Par.* xxix. 49). Again, 'I saw another spirit move and circle round, and joy was whip to the top' (*Par.* xviii. 40). Such instances might be largely multiplied. As Mr. Symonds says, 'It is the pre-Raphaelite exactness of Dante which has brought him to this pass' (p. 211); and again, 'His grotesqueness is the result of realism, rejecting nothing so long as it is suited to express an idea' (p. 209). Nothing was to him from this point of view 'common or unclean.' Coleridge, however, thinks that this is sometimes carried too far to be thus defended. 'Dante occasionally becomes grotesque from being too graphic without imagination. Sometimes he is *horrible* rather than *terrible*, inspiring bodily disgust, rather than moral fear—the *μυστήριον* as opposed to *δευρόν* of Longinus' (*Lit. Rem.* i. p. 166). As an instance of extreme matter-of-factness Mr. Ruskin notices the introduction of the name of a street in Paris—'Straw Street'—in the midst of a description of the highest heavens. See *Par.* x. 136-139. On this he remarks: 'What did it matter to Dante, up in heaven there, whether the mob below thought him vulgar or not? Sigieri had read in Straw Street; that was the fact, and he had to say so, and there was an end' (*M. P.* iii. p. 86). Finally, in reference to these and many passages cited in the text already, I would quote Mr. Ruskin once more:—'Whether this be in what we moderns call "good taste" or not, I do not mean just now to inquire—Dante having nothing to do with taste, but with the facts of what he had seen' (*M. P.* iii. p. 216). It is (to use the words of Shakespeare),

'As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors.'

In much the same sense Macaulay in his Essay on Milton says of Dante :—‘ However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. . . . His similes . . . are introduced in a plain business-like manner ; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn ; not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem, but simply in order to make the idea of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself.’

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE II

IT has been necessary for me in the case of many of the contemptuous, commonplace, or even coarse expressions to which Dante gives vent in ‘the bitterness of his spirit,’ to supply as far as possible what seems to be the nearest English equivalent. It is well to caution readers unfamiliar with Italian, that it must not be assumed that these words reproduce the exact effect of the original. It is very hard indeed, often impossible, to match the exact shade of meaning of a word by any other word or expression in another language. Hence the supreme difficulty of translation. But this difficulty is greatly increased in the case of such words as we have been considering. They are affected by all kinds of subtle associations in their colloquial usages ; and besides this, the effect produced by such *bizarrierie* nowadays is intensified, exaggerated, overdone, however literal the actual rendering may seem, in comparison of its effect when written, owing to the different standards of taste, refinement, rules of art (conventional in some cases and to some degree), prevailing at different epochs. Of this we have a familiar illustration in such an expression as ‘Thou fool,’ as it occurs in some passages in our translation of the Bible. I must not be thought to have been unconscious of these important considerations.

V. UNITY AND SYMMETRY OF DESIGN IN THE PURGATORIO.

BEFORE entering on the details involved in this subject, it will perhaps be well, for the sake of readers who may not be familiar with it, to give a brief sketch of Dante's general conception of the realm of Purgatory as a whole.

He imagined it in the form of a conical mountain flat at the top, and therefore, to speak more accurately, one in the shape of a truncated cone. This was thought to be the only land existing in the vast ocean solitude of the Southern hemisphere. With this exception, all the 'dry land' on the globe (the *gran secca* of *Inf.* xxxiv. 113) was confined to the Northern hemisphere, and even there it was supposed not to reach within about 600 or 700 miles of the Equator. The Southern hemisphere was the 'mondo senza gente,' as it is described in the splendid episode of the Voyage of Ulysses in *Inf.* xxvi. This was the common mediaeval belief. The origin of the Mountain of Purgatory is explained somewhat grotesquely by Dante in *Inf.* xxxiv. 121-126. We read there that Lucifer, when cast out from heaven, fell upon the Southern hemisphere. The land that was there before, for dread of him, covered itself with the sea as with a veil, and came to our hemisphere. And perhaps, as Dante cautiously adds, 'the land which now appears in the Southern hemisphere (i.e. the Mountain of Purgatory), in order to escape from him, left this space void (i.e. the *natural burella*,

or dungeon, l. 98, through which Dante and Virgil were at that moment ascending from the centre of the earth where Lucifer was fixed) and ran up in a heap' (*e su ricorse*): and thus was formed the conical Mountain of Purgatory. Further, it appears from *Purg.* iv. 68 *seqq.* and also ii. 1-9, that the Mountain of Purgatory was the antipodes of Jerusalem, and therefore at the centre of the Southern hemisphere in respect of longitude just as Jerusalem was 'set in the midst of the earth' (Ezek. v. 5) in the Northern hemisphere. The base of this island mountain was fringed with reeds, which, emblematic of humility and submission, offered no resistance to the perpetual beating of the ocean waves. No plant could live there except on these conditions (i. 100-105). The mountain itself was divided into three well-marked portions or zones.

1. Its lower part consisted of a very steep and difficult slope¹, the ascent of which occupies Dante the whole of the first day from dawn²—which is described in a very beautiful passage in *Purg.* ii. 13-21—to evening, the approach of which is depicted in the exquisite and justly celebrated lines at the beginning of Canto viii. This lower region of the Mountain does not form part of Purgatory itself, but is outside its gate, and is known as the Ante-Purgatory. It is occupied by those who from various causes have omitted Penance or delayed Repentance till the very moment of death. Of these causes four are specified: (1) Unjust Excommunication; (2) Sheer negligence or indolence; (3) Violent death; (4) Absorption in the cares of State. These sinners do not suffer any definite form of punishment, but they are shut out from the privilege of entering Purgatory and commencing their expiatory sufferings for periods of various lengths. They eagerly long for that privilege, and many are the touching messages confided to Dante for their friends on earth, so that by pious prayers this penal exclusion may be shortened³.

¹ *Purg.* iv. 19-51.

² Viz., as I confidently hold, that of Easter Day, April 10, 1300. See *Time References, &c.*, pp. 55, 56.

³ See on this further *supra*, p. 52.

Such is the fate of every one who, in the language of Virgil (*Aen.* vi. 569),

‘Distulit in seram commissa piacula mortem.’

2. The second division of the Mountain, comprising Purgatory proper, presents a different appearance. It consists of seven ledges or cornices (*cornici*) regularly receding¹, or growing narrower as they rise, somewhat after the familiar figure of a Chinese Pagoda, or the conventional pictures of the Tower of Babel. On each of these ledges is purged one of the Seven Deadly or Mortal Sins, which are recognized by the teaching and authority of the Church. It is to the symmetrical arrangements and carefully planned correspondences of this part of the poem that our attention is principally to be directed. This covers Cantos ix-xxvii inclusive.

It will be observed therefore that Dante does not enter Purgatory itself until Canto ix, on the morning of his second day upon the mountain. Every one is, or ought to be, familiar with the beautiful description of the Gate of Purgatory, and the three steps by which it is approached, in Canto ix. 76 *seqq.*

3. When the last of these ledges is surmounted, the summit of the mountain is occupied by a sort of table-land, on which is situated the Earthly Paradise. It forms the subject of Cantos xxviii-xxxiii. Here Dante meets Beatrice, and is reproached by her for his backsliding and unfaithfulness since her departure from the earth—in whatever sense her language is to be understood, which is likely to be always a subject of dispute. Then follows a Mystical Procession of the Church Militant, and an elaborate Apocalyptic Vision of the disasters about to fall upon it in connexion with the removal of the Papal See to Avignon. Finally Dante is bathed in the waters of Lethe and Eunoe;

¹ This is the exact meaning of the technical architectural term *risega* in *Purg.* xiii. 2, though most MSS. have substituted for it the more commonplace and familiar word *rilega*, which gives, in fact, no appropriate sense, though it looks *prima facie* very easy and simple.

Lethe causing forgetfulness of evil, and Eunoe bringing all good things to remembrance. Thus 'like new plants renewed with new leaves'—this ecstatic repetition of the word is Dante's own—he is rendered 'pure, and made meet to mount up to the Stars':—

' Come piante novelle
Rinnovellate di novella fronda,
Puro e disposto a salire alle stelle.'

Confining our attention now to the central part of the poem, which deals with Purgatory proper, I will first set out clearly the several different points of similarity, no less than six, which will be found repeated (with the very slight exceptions to be noticed later) on every one of the *Cornici*.

On each one of them then we find:—

(1) An appropriate form of punishment or corrective discipline (*κόλασις*).

(2) Appropriate subjects prescribed for meditation.

(3) These subjects always include (i) examples of the Virtue to be acquired; and (ii) examples of the Vice to be eradicated: and these pairs of examples are marked by several striking features of correspondence.

(4) The first example of the Virtue is always derived from some incident in the life of the Blessed Virgin.

(5) There is always prescribed (with one significant exception) some Prayer, or Hymn, or Passage of Scripture, taken from the Offices of the Church.

(6) The penitents are dismissed by an Angel with one of the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount.

To these we may add as a further and more general indication of systematic arrangement:—

(7) The symmetrical disposition among the seven *Cornici* of the three days and three nights spent on the Mountain of Purgatory, with other minor significant and symbolical details.

Reference should be made here and throughout to the tabular view exhibiting the most important of these details, which will be found on p. 268 *a*.

We will now speak of these several points in order, though in some cases only a few words further need be added.

I. First then, there is a definite form of punishment assigned to each *Cornice*, appropriate in character to the sin which has to be expiated. The same fitness of relation between the sin and the punishment is found in the Inferno, but there the punishment is retributive (*τιμωρία*), here it is corrective (*κόλασις*). A bare enumeration of these will be sufficient, as the reason for their choice will be sufficiently obvious. Thus *Pride* is punished by bearing heavy masses of rock by which the body is bent down almost to the earth; *Envy* by the closing of the eyes by a suture of wire; *Anger* by a dense and blinding and pungent smoke; *Accidia*, or Spiritual Sloth, by continual and restless motion; *Avarice* by the prostration of the body face downwards on the earth; *Gluttony* by extreme emaciation combined with constant hunger and thirst; *Lust* by a burning fire of purification.

II. Besides the corrective chastisement, there will be found provided on each *Cornice* subjects for meditation, appropriate to the special Sin committed and the special Virtue neglected. For it must be remembered that Purgatory provides the opportunity that was missed in life for cultivating and acquiring that holiness of character without which 'no man can see God.' Thus these prescribed subjects for meditation in each case supply the means for building up that particular part of the moral character which had been either broken down or left undeveloped through the practice of some definite sin in this life. As Dante expresses it in *Purg.* xvii. 85-87 :—

'L' amor del bene, scemo
Di suo dover, quiritta si ristora,
Qui si ribatte il mal tardato remo.'

'The love of good that has fallen short of its duty, here is restored. Here is plied again the ill-slackened oar.' Or as Ruskin has well expressed it (*Fors*, xxiv. p. 8):—'It is questioned of no one in Purgatory what he has *done*, but only what evil feeling is still in his heart, or what good, when purified wholly, his nature is noble enough to receive.' The

examples of Virtue and Vice, operating respectively by encouragement and warning, are intended to secure this result.

III. The third point embraces the great bulk of our subject, for it is in the grouping and balancing of these examples of Virtues and Vices, and in the curious variations and coincidences of their manner of presentment in each *Cornice*, that the most striking evidence is found of that careful premeditation and comprehensive design which it is my purpose to trace out.

I wish to call attention specially to four points of correspondence in respect of these examples.

(i) Examples of the *Virtue* are found at the *beginning* of each *Cornice*, and those of *Vice* at the *end*.

(ii) There is a studied correspondence between the numbers of these examples.

(iii) Sacred and profane instances are balanced and interchanged.

(iv) The manner of their presentment is different on every *Cornice*, but each virtue and its related vice are similarly presented.

(i) That the pilgrims always find the examples of the Virtue on entering, and those of the contrary Vice on leaving, each *Cornice* will appear from the references given in the Table at the end of this Essay, and needs no further demonstration.

(ii) The correspondence in the numbers of the related examples (for which again see the Table) calls for a few words of explanation. The sixth *Cornice* (that of Gluttony) exhibits the solitary exception. It is one which I am unable to explain, but it is an exception which, if it does not 'prove,' certainly does not appreciably weaken, the observed 'rule.' Generally, the actual number of instances of each is the same, as on *Cornici* 2, 3, 4 and 7. Sometimes, the number of individual instances of the Virtue corresponds with a similar number of well-marked *groups* of instances of the Vice, as on *Cornici* 1 and 5. For vice is not only more common, and therefore more prolific of conspicuous examples, but it is often multiform, and especially so in the case of the two vices with

which *Cornici* 1 and 5 are concerned, viz. Pride and Avarice. We need hardly be reminded of the familiar *dictum* :—

ἐσθλοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἀπλῶς, παντοδαπῶς δὲ κακοί.

In the case of the examples of Pride, Dante has taken singular pains to mark them off into groups, by the highly artificial and symmetrical structure of the lines in which they are described. See *Purg.* xii. 25–63. The first group of four are delineated in four *terzine*, each of which begins with *Vede*a (ll. 25–36); the second group in four *terzine*, each beginning with *O* (ll. 37–48); and the third group with four *terzine*, each beginning with *Mostrava* (ll. 49–60). And as if this were not enough, these three words are repeated as the initial words of the three lines of the next *terzina*, in which a final and crowning example of fallen pride is given, not from any individual case, but from the fate of the great city of Troy—‘superbum Ilion’—which thus falls as it were outside the system of groups of individuals, focussing them all in one grand historic catastrophe.

I should have had a good deal to say about the principle of selection in the first of these groups (ll. 25–36)—especially as it has, I think, been generally overlooked, and at any rate it certainly was so by myself when I first wrote on this subject in an Appendix to my *Time References* in 1887—but I have already dealt with it so fully in the first Series of these *Studies*, that it is only necessary now to refer to what I have said there (see p. 251 n.). One further point may be added, viz. that Dante has emphasized the distinction there contended for between Briareus and the group of the Giants by marking off Lucifer and Briareus as a related pair, by the words *da un lato* in reference to the former, and *dall' altra parte* for the latter. Also, for the association of Nimrod in Dante with the Tower of Babel, which makes him pair suitably with the Giants who sought to storm heaven, see *Studies* I, pp. 73, 74¹. In the other two groups, there are several subtle points of suitability in the choice and arrange-

¹ I may add here a reference to Orosius II. vi. § 7, where he speaks of Babylon as ‘a Nembrot gigante fundatam.’

ment of the examples which readily suggest themselves. Thus, Niobe and Arachne, and Saul and Rehoboam, naturally balance one another. Again, in the case of Eriphyle and Alcmaeon, as also in that of Sennacherib and his sons, their own children were the avenging instruments of the parents' vanity or haughtiness. And the last pair have obviously this in common, that Cyrus and Holofernes were both humbled by being 'delivered into the hands of a woman.'

I conclude this reference to the various manifestations of this multiform root-sin of Pride, 'this first plague-spot of the human spirit,' by quoting an eloquent passage from a sermon on this subject preached before the University of Oxford in 1894 by the Dean of Lincoln:—

'By the side of the apostate angel and the builders of Babel, of the wayward kings, and the proud heathen oppressors of Israel, are the images in which Greek legend had loved to set its mark on the follies and crimes of human pride—pride in its most varied forms; the pride of brute strength, and of the cunning hand; of pitiless revenge, and of feminine vanity; of a nation's arrogant wrongdoing, and of a mother's overfond heart.'

There is only one other *Cornice* in which the grouping of instances seems to call for a passing remark. It occurs in the case of Avarice, in *Cornice* 5. The evidence of grouping is doubtless much less clear, and the result less distinctly symmetrical in this case. But the ground on which I claim to trace three groups is that we have—(1) two instances from profane history or legend; (2) three instances from Scripture; and (3) again two instances from profane history. There is at least a sort of *stratification* if not a definite grouping of instances here, and certainly a threefold arrangement emerges therefrom, corresponding with the three examples of the Virtue given in the early part of the same Canto, viz. B.M.V., Fabricius, and St. Nicolas.

(iii) This leads us naturally to the third point which we have to notice, viz. the striking alternation of instances from sacred and profane history. We may observe that this holds good even in the case of *Cornice* 6, the one in

which the *numerical* symmetry of the instances is not maintained.

I have spoken of this sufficiently already in the Essay on 'Dante as a Religious Teacher,' *supra*, pp. 22-25, and also in the former Series of these *Studies*, pp. 26-28, and I have further suggested a probable reason for this habitual practice of Dante in all his writings, prose as well as verse.

(iv) The last and most striking evidence of carefully designed arrangement, being less obvious on the surface, has not, as far as I know, been noticed before. It is this. In every *Cornice* a *different* method is adopted for the presentation of the examples of Virtues and Vices; and it implies not a little thought and ingenuity to devise seven different methods, methods too which are often also very strikingly appropriate to the circumstances. But in *all* cases the examples of the Virtue and the Vice related to it are presented *in the same manner*, even though sometimes one or two whole Cantos may have intervened between the presentment of the contrasted groups of examples. See for instance the references given in the Table under *Cornici* 1, 3 and 6.

1. On the first *Cornice* the examples of Humility and Pride are presented by means of *sculptured imagery*, but with a significant difference. The examples of Humility are 'exalted' on the wall of rock, so that the proud sinners have to look up to them; those of Pride are depicted on the pavement (like the celebrated pictured floor of the Cathedral of Siena), so that not only must the penitents bow themselves down to contemplate them¹, but also they must trample them under their feet as they walk. The three examples of Humility (see x. 28-96) form three real gems of description, and particularly the episode of Trajan and the widow. Dante, following a popular tradition, also accepted by St. Thomas Aquinas, represents Trajan as being saved, though a heathen², by the special intercession of

¹ Comp. xii. 13, 'Volgi gli occhi in giue.'

² Only two other instances of this occur in the poem, Rhipeus the Trojan, and the Roman poet Statius. For this see *Studies*, First Series, pp. 30 *seqq.*, and 171; and also *supra*, pp. 38-40.

Gregory the Great, the Pope having been moved by deep admiration for the act of humility and condescension here recorded of Trajan.

2. In the *Cornice* of Envy, *voices in the air* are heard conveying the examples for imitation or warning, but those who utter them are invisible. Our attention is specially drawn to this on both occasions. In xiii. 25 spirits were felt flying past, *non però visti*. And again, in xiv. 130 *seqq.* a *voice* seemed to meet them, flashing upon them with the suddenness of lightning, and again another voice (l. 137) that fell with a crash like the following thunder. It must not be overlooked that the spirits in this *Cornice* have their eyes sewn up with a thread of iron, 'just as a wild falcon has its eyes sewn up'; see xiii. 67-72. Thus any *visible* presentment of the examples given would have been useless. That is the sort of point which Dante would never overlook, and he is so determined that we shall note this, that he begins the description of this *Cornice* (see xiii. l. 7) by telling us that the wall of rock, as well as the footway, was smooth and bare, with no shadowed outline (*ombra*) and no imagery (*segno*), as the description of the last *Cornice* might have led us to expect, but all was of one uniform livid hue, a suitable symbol of Envy.

3. In the third *Cornice*, that of Anger, the examples are presented in a sort of *ecstatic vision*. See xv. 85, 86:

'Ivi mi parve in una visione
Estatica di subito esser tratto.'

Then follow the three examples of Meekness. In xvii. 13 *seqq.* the three examples of the Sin of Anger are presented in precisely the same manner. In the latter case, Dante represents himself as so completely abstracted from and unconscious of the scene actually around him, that he apostrophizes in the midst of his narrative this strange power which the imagination has over the senses. So also in the former case, the character of the ecstatic vision is similarly emphasized in xv. 118-123, where Dante describes himself as awaking from a sort of trance, and makes Virgil (who apparently has not experienced any similar ecstatic visions) ask him why he has stumbled along for more than half a league

like a man overcome with wine or sleep. Again it will be remembered, that this *Cornice* was pervaded by a blinding smoke, making it darker than the darkest night (xvi. 1 *seqq.*), and so pungent that it was not possible to keep the eyes open—a fit image of the blinding effects of Anger. Hence again any visible presentment of the examples would have been useless.

4. In the *Cornice* of Accidia¹ or Spiritual Sloth, *two of the souls* undergoing purification themselves proclaim the two examples both of the Virtue and of the Vice. See xviii. 99, '*Due dinanzi gridavan piangendo*'; and again in l. 131, '*vedine due Venire, dando all' accidia di morso*.' Note also that in each case the two act as spokesmen of a large band, in the former case coming *before* them, '*due dinanzi*' (l. 99), in the latter coming *last* of all, '*Diretro a tutti dicean*' (l. 133).

5. In the *Cornice* of Avarice *one and the same person* (in fact Hugh Capet) is made to repeat all the instances both of Virtue and Vice. See for the three former, xx. 19 *seqq.*, and especially ll. 30, 31 and 34 *seqq.*, as showing that *one* person gave utterance to them all, and l. 49 for his identification as Hugh Capet. He continues to be the speaker up to l. 123, and from l. 103 onwards he enumerates the examples of Avarice which are held up to odium. He tells Dante that all the spirits from time to time with greater or less vehemence, according to the various intensity of the feeling by which they are moved (ll. 118–119), proclaim the praises of one and the odium of the other set of examples, although he *alone* happened to be thus raising his voice when Dante met them (see ll. 122–123). Note here again how Dante by various artifices emphasizes the precise manner of presentment of the examples in each *Cornice*, lest it should escape our notice. Also observe how the examples of the Virtue are appropriately set forth *by day*, and those of the Vice *by night*. For this distinction see ll. 100–102, and again l. 121.

6. In the next *Cornice*, where Gluttony is expiated, it will be remembered that part of the penalty consists in

¹ The explanation of this term, once familiar in English as 'accidie,' but now almost forgotten, will be found in Essay III, *supra*, pp. 183, 184.

gazing upon a mystic tree (xxii. 130 *seqq.*) whose branches, inaccessible to the hungry and parched multitude, and carefully guarded against their approach (ll. 134-135), are covered with fruit of delicious odour, and dripping with the water of a limpid stream falling upon them from the rock above. This tree is encountered at the entrance to the Circle, and *a voice is heard from the midst of its branches* (l. 140) proclaiming the examples of temperance in eating and drinking. Then again at the exit from the Circle another similar tree is met with, laden with tempting fruit, and surrounded by an eager multitude crying like children with outstretched hands for something which is tantalizingly held before their eyes but out of their reach. (See xxiv. 103-111.) From *the leaves of this tree*, in like manner as before, though two Cantos have intervened, a voice is heard proclaiming the warning examples of gluttonous excess (see l. 118). Dante adds that this tree is an offshoot from that which Eve ate of, which itself stands above in the Terrestrial Paradise (ll. 115-117). It has been thought, with good reason, that the other tree in Canto xxii was intended similarly to be connected with the Tree of Life, since in Gen. ii. 9 these two trees and these only are specifically and by name mentioned as growing in the Garden of Eden. So the careful way in which the approach to it is guarded (see xxii. 135) may have been suggested by Gen. ii. 21-24, though the actual means for this safeguarding are different in the two cases.

7. In the last *Cornice*, where Lust is expiated, *the spirits in the midst of the purifying fire* are praising God in the words of the beautiful Matins Hymn, *Summae Deus clementiae*. Twice is this repeated in Dante's hearing (see xxv. 121 and 129), and each time, when the hymn is ended, an example of Chastity is proclaimed aloud, viz. the Blessed Virgin (l. 128) and Diana (l. 131), i.e. the two chief types of virginal purity in sacred and profane theology, if one may use the term. Then the spirits return to singing the hymn once more (l. 133), and after that, they proclaim many other appropriate instances (but these are not mentioned by

name) of purity¹ in *married* life, both of men and women (ll. 133-135). Now note how the same order is observed, two Cantos later, in regard to the warning examples of Impurity, though a brief and friendly greeting between two bands of penitents here takes the place of the hymn. See xxvi. 28 *seqq.* Two instances as before are named, one from sacred and one from profane history, and then they return to their singing, and to proclaiming examples of Chastity as before.

Surely no poet ever paid such minute attention to all the details and accessories of his work as Dante has done. Surely none ever practised more thoroughly the precept of Aristotle in the *Poetics* (c. xvii. *init.*), that a poet should always realize the scenes which he describes as though they were present before his eyes, and as if he were himself an actor in them. It is this same intense power of realization that has saved Dante from even the smallest slip of inconsistency in relation to the assumed date of Easter 1300 for the Vision of the *Divina Commedia*. I believe that no single event after that date is ever referred to except under the fiction of 'prophecy,' though these 'prophecies' serve to prove that the composition of the poem was proceeding many years after that date. Nor is any person met with in any of the three realms of the other world who was not actually dead before 1300², though several of those mentioned as living died very shortly afterwards. Thus we may truly say

'Morti li morti, e i vivi parean vivi.' (*Purg.* xii. 67.)

IV. We now proceed to our fourth point of similarity, viz. that in every *Cornice* the first of the examples of Virtue is taken from some incident in the life of the Blessed Virgin. Dante, no doubt, borrowed this idea (as Perez and others have pointed out) from S. Bonaventura, in whose case, as

¹ Compare *Conv.* IV. xxviii. 68-73, where Dante protests against limiting the term 'religious' life to celibate life, since good and true religion can equally be practised in married life, 'chè Iddio non vuole religione di noi se non il cuore.'

² Except, of course, in the case of the special form of living death devised by Dante for the blackest forms of treachery, such as that of Frate Alberigo, in *Inf.* xxxiii. (See *supra*, p. 241.)

in that of S. Thomas Aquinas, he has boldly anticipated the judgement of the Church by a canonization of his own, assigning to them both, in the beautiful eleventh and twelfth Cantos of the *Paradiso*, a very high place among the Sainted Doctors of the Church¹. These are the words of S. Bonaventura in Lectio IV of his *Speculum Beatae Mariae Virginis*:—‘Ipsa est Maria, quae et omni vitio caruit, et omni virtute claruit. Ipsa, inquam, est Maria, quae a septem vitiis capitalibus fuit immunissima².’ He then enumerates the seven Virtues which the Virgin exhibited in direct contrast with these seven Vices, or Deadly Sins, in the exact order in which they are given by Dante³, and next proceeds to justify the above statement in detail throughout the rest of the chapter, by references (as in Dante) to the several incidents in her life, in which these seven contrasted Virtues were displayed. These incidents however do not correspond generally with those selected by Dante.

V. Not only are the penitents on each *Cornice* furnished, as we have seen, with appropriate examples of Virtues and Vices for meditation, but also in each case (with one remarkable exception) there is prescribed for their use some special form of prayer, or some familiar passage of Scripture, these being taken in all cases from some of the *public Offices of the Church*.

(1) In the case of *Pride*, it is the Lord’s Prayer, which is beautifully paraphrased by Dante at the beginning of Canto xi. Thus the all-embracing sin of Pride is counteracted by the most comprehensive of all prayers⁴. It has been pointed out in Essay III that some Church writers (e.g. S. Gregory)

¹ See Liddon, *Essays*, &c., p. 200.

² He returns to this thought, and treats it again at greater length in Lect. XV.

³ On the subject of this order see Essay III *supra*, p. 194.

⁴ S. Augustine says:—‘Quamlibet alia verba dicamus . . . nihil aliud dicimus si recte et congruenter oramus quam quod in ista oratione dominica positum est.’ *Epist.* cxxi. 5, cap. 12. Again, Hugh of S. Victor, *Alleg. in Matth.*, Lib. II, c. vi. *fin.*, maintains that the seven petitions of the Lord’s Prayer avail severally against the Seven Deadly Sins one by one (thus, an idea good generally is worked threadbare in detail). Finally, there is an obvious propriety in this discipline for the Proud that they should ‘become as little children,’ and repeat that Prayer which (as Benvenuto says, *h. l.*) ‘sciunt omnes pueri et puellae.’

consider Pride to be the root or the mother of all the other sins, and so it is not reckoned with them (*οὐ συναριθμουμένη*) in the sevenfold classification. Vainglory, as distinguished from Pride, in that case takes its place.

(2) In the case of *Envy*, we have prescribed the *Confiteor* from the Canon of the Mass, or at least we have quoted in a versified form portions of it sufficient to identify or recall it to mind. See xiii. 50, 51 :—

‘Udi’ gridar: “Maria, ora per noi,”
Gridar: “Michele, e Pietro, e tutti i Santi.”’

The *Confiteor* ends thus :—

‘Precor beatam Mariam semper Virginem, beatum Michaellem Archangelum, beatum Joannem Baptistam, sanctos Apostolos Petrum et Paulum, omnes sanctos, . . . orare pro me ad Dominum Deum nostrum.’

(3) In the case of *Anger*, we have the *Agnus Dei*, also from the Canon of the Mass. See xvi. 19.

(4) On the *Cornice* of *Accidia*, there is no such form prescribed, and to this I shall return presently.

(5) In the case of *Avarice*, in allusion to the grovelling character of the sin¹, we find the passage from Ps. cxviii. (cxix.) 25, *Adhaesit pavimento*, ‘My soul cleaveth unto the dust.’ This occurs in the daily Office for Prime. See xix. 73.

(6) In the case of *Gluttony* (see xxiii. 11), the words prescribed are the well-known ‘Labia mea, Domine,’ from Ps. l. (li.) 17, which is the invocation used at the beginning of each of the Church Offices, being the first words uttered by the Priest. We are familiar with them in our own daily Service in the form, ‘O Lord, open thou our lips.’

(7) In the *Cornice* of Lust we find the hymn *Summae Deus clementiae*. See xxv. 121. Here arises a curious point well worthy of our attention. A hymn beginning with these precise words is used on one of the Festivals of the Blessed Virgin (‘Septem Dolorum’); but there is another hymn beginning, ‘Summae Parens clementiae,’ which occurs in the

¹ See further on this *supra*, pp. 75, 76.

regular office for Matins on Saturday. Now the contents of this latter hymn are most appropriate for the purpose to which Dante applies it, while those of the other hymn, 'Summae *Deus* clementiae,' are not at all so. It has sometimes therefore been supposed that Dante intended to refer to this Matins Hymn, though he has not quite accurately quoted it. The true explanation is curiously different from this. The Matins hymn originally, and in Dante's time, was in fact in the form 'Summae *Deus* clementiae,' not *Parens*, exactly as Dante quotes it, though it is no longer so in the present Breviary. The alteration in this line (as well as several others coming afterwards in the same hymn) was introduced in the year 1631, at the revision of Urban VIII¹, by whom many of the ancient hymns were somewhat modernized, harsh or rugged expressions being softened down, and other adaptations or supposed improvements introduced. If any one will refer to this Saturday Matins hymn in some of the ancient uses (such e.g. as Sarum, Hereford, York), it will be found in the form quoted by Dante². Indeed, he could no more be expected to quote it in any other, than Milton could be expected to recognize the version of Brady and Tate. Thus we see in all these cases that Dante drew upon very familiar and well-known parts of the Offices of the Church, in prescribing prayers or meditations for the discipline of the several classes of penitents.

Now let us return to the significant omission in the case of *Accidia*, the solitary exception, which can hardly be accidental. One might boldly say that nothing in Dante is accidental, which so strikingly cuts across the lines of a deliberately studied plan as this anomaly does. What then can we suggest as his most likely motive in this omission? Did he perhaps mean to suggest that the special aid of the Church's Offices would not be provided for those whose special sin was the habitual neglect of them? Was it part of their penalty to be deprived of privileges of which they had deprived themselves, even now when they might 'desire to see them'? Is

¹ Maskell, *Mon. Rû.*, &c., ii. p. xxi.

² It is still, I believe, so used by the Benedictines.

not this the principle of retributive justice which Dante himself formulates in the *Inferno*:—

‘Chè non è giusto aver ciò ch’ uom si toglie’? (*Inf.* xiii. 105.)

That is one possible suggestion. Or was this perhaps the reason? The spirits on this *Cornice* expiate their former slackness by perpetual and restless motion (see xviii. 97, 103–105). They cannot even stop to point out to Virgil and Dante the road, notwithstanding the appearance of discourtesy (*villania*) in the refusal (l. 115). They rush by so fast that only a few words of any reply can be heard (l. 127). Such unceasing activity would perhaps seem to exclude the attitude of restful devotion found on the other *Cornici*. Under the peculiar circumstances of *their* discipline we might perhaps say that ‘laborare est orare.’ But however we may explain it, the omission is surely both intentional and significant.

In connexion with this it is to be noticed that this appears to be the only *Cornice* in which there is not either some request for the aid of the prayers of living friends, or some reference to the help already derived from them¹. Surely this significant exception points in the same direction. It has also been observed that in this *Cornice* alone Dante never speaks to any of the spirits. Again, none of them are ever named, the Abbot of S. Zeno being the only one even definitely mentioned, and he not by name, so that he cannot in fact be identified. It seems that to these sluggish and listless sinners Dante extended the same contempt which he exhibits for those in *Inf.* iii, of whom he says:—

‘Fama di loro il mondo esser non lassa

Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa.’

VI. When the purification is accomplished on any of the *Cornici*, and the spirit now cleansed is being liberated from it, he is in each case dismissed by an Angel, who ‘ministers to these heirs of salvation,’ by wiping away from his forehead the mark of that particular sin, and then greets him with a Blessing embodied in one of the Beatitudes from the

¹ This has been already pointed out, and the passages bearing on it quoted *supra*, p. 53, note 1.

Sermon on the Mount¹. The idea of thus applying the Beatitudes is found, though not in such complete correspondence as is sometimes implied, in Hugh of S. Victor, a Doctor whom Dante places in Paradise (xii. 133), and with whose works he was certainly familiar. In his *Annotationes Allegoriarum in Matthaeum*, Lib. II, c. 15², Hugh says that there are 'quinque septena in Sacra Scriptura contenta.' They are:—(1) Seven Deadly Sins; (2) Seven Petitions in the Lord's Prayer; (3) Seven Gifts of the Spirit; (4) Seven Virtues included in the Beatitudes; (5) Seven corresponding Blessings pronounced in the Beatitudes. It will be seen then that if Dante borrowed the idea of thus using the Beatitudes from Hugh of S. Victor, his treatment of it is entirely independent. For Hugh dwells only on the correspondence of the number Seven in each case without working out any association between each Beatitude and the conquest of a special form of Sin. Another point to notice is, that Dante omits the second Beatitude (*Beati mites*), preferring to use the seventh for the conquest of Anger (*Beati pacifici*). Also he divides the fourth into two, adopting 'sitiunt' in its metaphorical sense against Avarice; while 'esuriunt' is set against the vice of Gluttony (see Table, p. 268 a).

VII. Finally (as I have noted in my *Time References*) the unity and symmetry of the whole design is illustrated by the disposition of the four days and three nights which are spent upon the Mountain of Purgatory. The first day is spent in Ante-Purgatorio; the first night, 'when no man can work,' as we are reminded in vii. 49-54, is passed in repose outside the Gate of Purgatory, in the beautiful 'Valley of

¹ My readers will, I suppose, remember that when Dante enters Purgatory (see ix. 112) the Angel at the Gate inscribes the letter P seven times upon his forehead, P being the initial letter of 'Peccatum,' and these symbolize the traces left upon him by the Seven Deadly Sins, or *Peccata Capitalia*, as they are commonly called. And in each of the seven *Cornici* one of these letters is wiped away, as soon as the corresponding sin is expiated. I may observe in passing that this notion of the mark of Sin upon the forehead is no doubt borrowed from Rev. xiii. 16, xx. 4, &c., where the adherents of the Beast receive his mark in their foreheads. Similarly in xxii. 4, and elsewhere, it is promised to the Saints that 'the name of God shall be in their foreheads.'

² Ed. 1648, vol. i. p. 303.

the Kings' as it is called¹ (Canto vii). During the second day, the first three *Cornici* are traversed. The second or central night is spent most appropriately upon the central *Cornice* where *Accidia* or Spiritual Sloth is expiated. Dante enters it as darkness comes on, see xvii. 70-80. Observe, too, how when he enters it his limbs seem to be suddenly paralyzed and powerless² (l. 75); and he is as unable to make progress as a stranded ship (l. 78). With equal appropriateness he leaves this *Cornice* in the morning, when he is aroused by the 'sol nuovo' (see xix. 38) after a kind of nightmare dream of the exposure of the loathsomeness of a Siren by the charm of whose voice he had been soothed at first (xix. 7-33). I need not stop to point out the suitability of this vision of the false Siren-like charms by which men are allured from the path of duty to ease and sloth (*Accidia*). But there is yet another significant touch. In this Circle of Sloth, Dante has himself fallen into such 'a deep sleep' that the sun is well up, and all the circles of the sacred mount are already filled with broad day, *alto dî* (xix. 38), when he first opens his eyes; and even this was not enough, for 'at least three times' had Virgil summoned him to be 'up and doing' before he could arouse him, and for this sloth he gently chides him (see ll. 33-35). Observe further how significantly Dante finds there is *silence* when he enters this *Cornice*, xvii. 79 *seqq.* In *Cornice* 2 there were voices proclaiming Love (xiii. 25), and in *Cornice* 3 spirits praying aloud (xvi. 16). The remaining three *Cornici* occupy the third day. After the purificatory fire of the last *Cornice* is safely passed, the now wholly cleansed spirits are greeted at last with the welcome of the final and most comprehensive of all Beatitudes—*Venite, benedicti patris mei*, 'Come ye, blessed of my Father' (xxvii. 58). By that time the sun is again setting and the night is drawing on (ll. 61 *seqq.*).

¹ For the many points of resemblance between this scene and that in *Aen.* vi. 679 *seqq.*, see *Studies*, First Series, p. 169.

² With similar appropriateness, when Dante enters the Heaven of Contemplation (Saturn), he says that his eyes were fixed on Beatrice,

'e l' animo con essi

E da ogni altro intento s' era tolto.' (*Par.* xxi. 2, 3.)

Then after a beautiful dream before sunrise (xxvii. 91 *seqq.*) Dante, no sluggard on this morning, awakes with the brightness that *precedes* the dawn, like a pilgrim conscious that he is 'one day nearer home' (ll. 109-114)¹. So as the sun is rising he enters the divine forest (*divina foresta*, xxviii. 2) which forms the entrance to the Earthly Paradise. The beautiful description of this makes a suitable conclusion to the journey which had commenced in the bewilderment of the *selva oscura*² before the entrance of Hell. Then finally at *Noon*, the 'colmo del dì' as he calls it in the *Convito*³, the hour which symbolizes perfection, completion, consummation, he is plunged in the waters of Eunoe and is made meet to mount up to Paradise. We must not fail to observe the beauty of the symbolism by which he leaves Purgatory and enters Paradise at Noon (*Purg.* xxxiii. 104)⁴, while he enters Ante-Purgatory, Purgatory itself, and also the Earthly Paradise at Sunrise or Dawn, the hour of hope and aspiration. This significance of the Dawn is found again in *Inf.* i. 37-43, when Dante first escapes from the dark forest, and thinks that he has now only to ascend straight the hill of Virtue without further hindrance (see *Inf.* i. 16; 77, 78; 91). In contrast with all this he enters Hell at nightfall, the hour of despair and disappointed hopes (see *Inf.* ii. 1). And note also in that passage the telling contrast between the aspect of night for all the living creatures that are upon the earth to whom it brings rest from toil, and for those who are entering on the threshold of Hell, to whom it is 'an image of that darkness which should afterwards receive them' (*Wisd.* xvii. 21). Then here again is another piece of symbolism and of symmetry which is not to be overlooked. The hour before sunrise

¹ Let us specially note these beautiful lines :—

'E già, per gli splendori antelucani,
Che tanto ai peregrin surgon più grati,
Quanto tornando albergan men lontani.'

Observe, also, how much depends on the true reading *men*, and not *più*, in the last line.

² Compare the 'selva erronea di questa vita' in *Conv.* IV. xxiv. 124.

³ *Conv.* IV. xxiii. 107.

⁴ I regret having made a very unfortunate mistake in this respect in my *Time References*, pp. 10, 53, 126.

is marked on each of the three days in Purgatory by a dream in which some truth is revealed or embodied¹. On the first day, Dante has the vision of the eagle carrying him off in the air like Ganymede, which corresponded with his actual transportation in his sleep by Sta. Lucia to the Gate of Purgatory (see ix. 13 *seqq.*). On the second day before sunrise occurs that dream in which the false allurements and true vileness of the Siren's temptations are exposed, which I have already referred to (xix. 1-34); on the third day before dawn there is the beautiful vision of Leah, the accepted symbol of the Active Life (as contrasted with the Contemplative Life assigned to Rachel), gathering flowers in a flowery land, a foretaste of the Earthly Paradise on which he was immediately to enter (xxvii. 94-108). This was the hour when, according to the belief of the ancient poets, dreams were true. (For this well-known commonplace of classical literature, see *Studies*, Series I, p. 217.) In one of the above passages, *Purg.* ix. 16, 17, Dante offers some sort of explanation of the supposed fact, viz. that the mind at that hour wanders forth further from the trammels of the flesh and of the bodily senses, and, being less hampered by its own thoughts, becomes gifted with a sort of divination in its visions. This idea seems to be suggested by a passage in Cicero, *de Sen.* xxii. § 80, as I have pointed out in *Textual Criticism*, p. 385.

It may perhaps seem a matter of surprise that we do not find the same elaborate arrangement and symmetry in the other two *Cantiche*. There is indeed a general order and consistent plan in the *Paradiso*, but there could scarcely be any scope there for such minuteness of articulation in detail as we have traced out. In the *Inferno* we are rather struck with a sense of disproportion in the space allotted to the several Circles, since the last three of the nine occupy twenty-three Cantos, and the remaining six come within seven Cantos, viz. the fourth to the tenth inclusive. It has been suggested

¹ Observe too how Dante, after his manner, emphasizes the symmetry and correspondence by introducing each of the three dreams by the same words, *Nell' ora*. See ix. 13; xix. 1; xxvii. 94. Mr. Butler has noted that the expression *Nell' ora* occurs only once besides in all the *Divina Commedia*, viz. *Par.* x. 140.

that in this, as well as some points of detail in treatment, there seems to be some evidence of a break in the composition, or a deliberate change of plan. This has been already discussed in Essay IV. But that a connected and somewhat elaborate plan is entirely in Dante's manner is evident from others of his works. We may cite first and chiefly the extraordinarily elaborate and mechanical structure of the *Vita Nuova*, first discovered by Professor Eliot Norton¹. The *De Monarchia* again is worked out on a consistent plan which is clearly laid down at the outset. Once more, the *Convito*, which now consists of only four Treatises or 'Trattati,' was destined to comprise fourteen, and their subjects, and even their order, were clearly 'blocked out' in the author's mind beforehand, as we may see from such passages as the following: I. viii. 131; xii. 87; II. i. 35; IV. xxvi. 66; and xxvii. 100². Those who, like myself, are by no means convinced of the spuriousness (commonly taken for granted) of the *Quaestio de Aqua et Terra* may be indulged in a passing reference to the minute anatomy of arguments, objections, replies, rejoinders, &c., which are such a prominent feature in that Treatise.

¹ See Appendix to the *New Life of Dante*, 1859.

² The same symmetry appears in respect of numbers. There are thirty-three Cantos, each devoted severally to the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso* (*Inf.* Canto i. being introductory to the whole work). This probably is the 'fren dell' arte' referred to as the reason for the *Purgatorio* ending where it does, in the curious passage xxxiii. 139-141:—

'Ma perchè piene son tutte le carte
Ordite a questa Cantica seconda,
Non mi lascia più ir lo fren dell' arte.'

Even the number of lines in each Cantica could scarcely be so nearly identical without deliberate purpose, viz. *Inferno*, 4720; *Purgatorio*, 4755; *Paradiso*, 4758. The number of poems in the *Vita Nuova* is also thirty-three. It is, perhaps, worth noticing that this is the number of Chapters or Sections in the *Epistle to Can Grande*, in which Dante deals with the interpretation of the *Divina Commedia*. Those who—infected by the epidemic of scepticism concerning the works of Dante, severely prevalent a few years ago but now happily abating—lightly reject this most interesting Epistle, might perhaps make a note (*inter alia*) of this curious point.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

P. 248. It should be added that the passage from one *Cornice* to another is in all cases effected by a steep and narrow stairway between two walls of rock. At the end of this passage the open surface of the next *Cornice* is reached. This is referred to in iv. 34, 35; x. 16-18; xix. 70. The former point may be illustrated from each *Cornice* as follows:—(1) x. 7-21; (2) xii. 106-108, 115; xiii. 1-3; (3) xv. 35, 36; (4) xvii. 61-66, 76, 77; (5) xviii. 111-114; xix. 48, 67-69; (6) xxii. 7-9, 117; (7) xxv. 7-9. The approach to two at least of the divisions of Ante-Purgatory is similarly described. See iii. 47 *seqq.*; and iv. 19 *seqq.*

P. 252. Mr. Toynbee has kindly sent me the following ingenious suggestion in reference to the remarkably symmetrical construction of *Purg.* xii. 25-63. I have already noticed (*supra*, p. 252, and *Studies*, I, p. 251) how the words *Vedea*, *O*, and *Mostrava* are each repeated four times in the *tersine* 25-60, and how they are once more summarized, so to speak, in the *tersina* 61-63 in the culminating example of 'Superbum Ilion.' Mr. Toynbee further suggests that the initial letters themselves have a significance, viz. VOM or UOM, i. e. 'Man.' Pride is the root-sin and primaeval curse of Man, the special cause of his Fall, as it was of that of the Angels before him. The Fall of Man is ascribed by Dante to the 'praesumptio' of Eve in *V. E. I.* iv. 12; and to her 'ardimento' in *Purg.* xxix. 24, these being but forms of Pride. So in *V. E. I.* vi. 47 the building of the tower of Babel is set down to 'praesumptio,' and it is here given as one of the typical instances of Pride, ll. 34-36. In *Par.* xxvi. 117 he declares that the fault of our first parents was not merely the eating of the fruit, but 'il trapassar del segno.' On this Scartazzini aptly quotes S. Thomas, *Summa*, ii. 2^{dae} Q. 163, Art. 1: 'Primum peccatum hominis fuit in hoc quod appetiit quoddam spirituale bonum *supra suam mensuram*, quod pertinet ad *superbiam*. Unde manifestum est quod primum peccatum primi hominis fuit *superbia*.' We might add Q. 162, Art. 7: 'Superbia habet rationem primi peccati, et est etiam principium omnium peccatorum.' It seems possible that Dante may have wished to emphasize this lesson by this artificial and anagrammatic arrangement of the manifold types of Pride. Observe how all this is followed immediately by an apostrophe to the *human race* in the folly of its pride (l. 70 *seqq.*):—

'Or superbite, e via col viso altiero,
Figliuoli d' Eva, e non chinate il volto,' &c.

VI. DANTE AND SICILY¹

TO prevent a misunderstanding of the title and subject of this Essay, it should be explained at the outset that there is no reason whatever to suppose that Dante ever set foot in Sicily. But the affairs of Sicily during his lifetime and for the half-century or so before his birth occupy a very prominent place not only in the general history of the times, but also in the writings of the poet. Indeed few periods in the world's annals are richer in dramatic interest than the history of Sicily in the thirteenth century, and especially in the latter part of it, when Dante (born in 1265) was growing up to manhood. Upon most of the chief actors in those stormy scenes he has conferred an immortality of fame or infamy in the pages of the *Divina Commedia*.

The death-struggle between Papacy and Empire, continued or recurring from generation to generation, with changes in the chief scene of action and in the principal personages by whom it was carried on, tended at this period to gravitate to Sicily. That kingdom had passed into the possession of the Suabian emperors of the house of Hohenstaufen, through the marriage of Henry VI with Constance, the posthumous and ultimately sole surviving child of King Roger. Sicily had often in previous ages been the battlefield of the nations, the theatre on which some of the most momentous conflicts

¹ Some portions of this Essay were printed in the (now extinct) *Universal Review* in 1889. It has been suggested to me to add a translation of the Italian passages quoted here, as the subject may perhaps interest some who have not made a special study of the *Divina Commedia*.

of the world's history had been fought out. So again in these latter days, the advent, in the way just described, of the Roman Emperor to a kingdom over which the Popes had long claimed, and endeavoured by various acts of policy to retain, special jurisdiction and authority—to say nothing of the perilous disturbance of the balance of power caused by the union of the German Empire on the north with the kingdom of Sicily, or rather of the two Sicilies, on the south¹—all this naturally transferred to Sicily at this time the centre of the undying strife between the Papacy and the Empire. As it has been well expressed, the accession of the Emperor Henry VI to the Sicilian throne moved the centre of gravity of the Empire from Germany to Sicily. Sicily, however, is the 'centre' of the struggle only so far as it was the chief *occasion and object* of the conflict, for that was actually fought out elsewhere, and mainly on the soil of Italy, whereas formerly the island had been itself the battlefield on which the fortunes of distant nations had been decided. This alone would be sufficient to explain why Sicily and her affairs had a special importance in the eyes of Dante; but beyond this, we must remember that some of the principal actors in these scenes were personally connected with, and the strife in which they were engaged profoundly influenced, the misfortunes, the hopes, the anxieties of the poet's own chequered career. It is not then to be wondered at, if, for the study of Dante and his divine poem, there is no region, even in Italy itself, more rich with memories, more fertile in associations, more full of interest, than

‘La bella Trinacria, che caliga
Tra Pachino e Peloro, sopra il golfo
Che riceve da Euro maggior briga’ (*Par.* viii. 67-9)²:

¹ Fuller (*Holy War*, iv. 25) expresses this idea with his usual quaintness: ‘The Pope was so ticklish he could not endure the same prince should embrace him on both sides.’

² ‘The realm
Where on the gulf by stormy Eurus lashed,
Betwixt Pelorus and Pachynian heights,
The beautiful Trinacria lies in gloom.’ (CARV.)

or, as it is described elsewhere—

‘l’ isola del foco,
Dove Anchise finì la lunga etate.’ (*Par.* xix. 131.)¹

As Dante had not himself apparently visited Sicily, the local allusions to the island are few and vague, and imply no more than common or general knowledge. He refers, for instance, to its three Promontories, to the fires of Etna, under its later name of Mongibello² (*Inf.* xiv. 56), and to the flowery meads of Enna in connexion with the tale of Proserpine (*Purg.* xxviii. 49–51). But had he been there, we should doubtless have had the distinct evidence, as in other cases, of his habit of accurate observation and minute topographical description. Thus this *argumentum e silentio* amounts in the case of Dante to something more than merely negative evidence. It is true that Vigo (in his *Dante e la Sicilia*, p. 54) fancifully argues from the commission to Dante by Manfred of a message to his beloved daughter Constance (*Purg.* iii. 115 and 143) that the poet was intending to visit Sicily, so that he would have an opportunity of delivering this message, and consequently that he did actually visit it! Even the excessively fine-drawn thread of probability involved in this prosaic argument unfortunately disappears when we recollect that Constance, the widow of Peter of Aragon, was then (i.e. in 1300) living in her adopted country, Spain, where she died shortly afterwards in 1302.

But though the poet was absent in the body, he was most deeply interested in the stirring events and the remarkable personages that wove the web of Sicilian history in the thirteenth century. We will endeavour, then, to bring together these characters, scenes, and events, as the divine

¹ ‘The Island of the Fire (Etna),
Wherein Anchises finished his long life.’ (LONGFELLOW.)

² This very natural-looking Italian word is a curious hybrid. ‘Gibello’ represents the Arabic *Ghebel* = a mountain. So Mongibello is a redundant compound like ‘Penhill,’ ‘Wickham,’ &c. In the *Trésor* of Brunetto Latini, Etna is called ‘Mont Gibel.’ So Gibraltar = Ghebel (or Jebel) Tarik, the latter word being a Moorish proper name.

poet has, by description or by pointed allusion, after his manner, represented them. It would be difficult to arrange on any precise or logical system the very numerous passages of this kind with which we have to deal. The best plan will probably be to enumerate rapidly the chief landmarks of the history of the island in the period referred to, and in that which shortly preceded it, for though these are matters easily to be ascertained, and in some sense within the reach of all, they may not be fresh in every reader's memory, and moreover they are by no means free from complication and difficulty, especially in the family relationships of some of the principal actors. In the course of this rapid sketch, we will work in, as we proceed, the allusions or illustrative passages to be found in Dante. Indeed, except when (for the sake of clearness of connexion) we have to fill in gaps between his references from the general history of the times, we shall be guided in our selection of persons and events by the fact that they are brought before us by Dante himself¹.

We need not go back beyond the Saracen conquest of the island in the ninth century, when they wrested it from the decaying Byzantine empire, and continued to rule it for about two hundred years, making Palermo the capital instead of Syracuse, and leaving behind them many beneficent traces of their rule. In the eleventh century, just five years before the Norman Conquest of England and the accession of the Conqueror—i.e. in 1061—came the Norman invasion of Sicily under Robert Guiscard (already Duke of Apulia and Calabria²) and his younger brother Roger, afterwards known as the Great Count. This Norman invasion of Sicily and South Italy was favoured by the Popes, and notably by Nicholas II; but they soon found that they had called to

¹ A tabular view will be found on p. 302 *a* of the principal persons here spoken of, with their family connexions, and some of the chief references to them in the *Divina Commedia*. These tables should be referred to throughout for the sake of clearness.

² Pope Nicholas II had given him the title of Duke of Apulia, Calabria and Sicily, which last he had yet to recover from the Saracens.—Milman, *L. C.* iii. p. 429.

their aid most dangerous and masterful allies¹, before whom even the strongest, such as Hildebrand, had to temporize, and sometimes even to yield. The Popes endeavoured to disguise the growing power and importance of the Normans by the recognition and concession of conquests which their formidable defenders had already achieved, and which they had no thought in any case of abandoning, though they had no objection to hold them 'by the grace of God and S. Peter.' The Popes were also liberal in the bestowal of titles which should seem to associate these conquests themselves with the Papal authority and sanction, from which the *titles* at any rate were in fact derived². Besides, in the frequent conflict of Pope and Antipope there were abundant opportunities for mutual bargaining between the struggling claimants for spiritual recognition and the consequent possessors (if successful) of unlimited spiritual power and patronage on the one side, and the masters of great battalions on the other. King Roger skilfully availed himself of this in the case of Anacletus, who was rapidly sinking into the position of Antipope (a position afterwards fully recognized), and was consequently sorely in need of material support. In return for this the Pope was most liberal in his promises of titles (among others that of king), of privileges, and exemptions. The concessions thus extorted from the hopes of Anacletus were confirmed by the fears of his successful rival Innocent, when he found himself a few years later a prisoner in the hands of King Roger³.

¹ As indeed the Greeks had already found, by whom the Normans had in the first instance been invited to assist them against the Saracens. Also forty years earlier than this invasion of Sicily by Robert Guiscard (viz. in 1021) Benedict VIII had established a garrison of Norman adventurers on the Garigliano.

² I refer especially to the title of 'hereditary Apostolic legate,' bestowed on Count Roger and his descendants by Urban II; in virtue of which King Roger in the mosaics of the Martorana Chapel at Palermo, and William the Good in those of the Cathedral of Monreale, are represented as wearing the dalmatic tunic peculiar to ecclesiastics. This is a good illustration of the 'tritum proverbium' quoted by Dante, *De Mon.* II. ix. 8, 'Cui Deus concedit, benedicat et Petrus.'

³ It is curious to trace this policy repeating itself on the side of the Popes, when there was a 'schism' in the Empire. This was their opportunity for

Though Dante does not refer to Roger, either the Count or the King, he twice mentions Robert Guiscard. He is named in *Inf.* xxviii. 14, among those whose conquests had in successive ages deluged with blood the Apulian soil—'la fortunata terra di Puglia,' as we read in *Inf.* xxviii. 8, so called, according to Serravalle in his note on this passage, as being really 'infelicissima, quia hic plus de sanguine humano est effusum quam in tota alia Italia.' We afterwards find Robert Guiscard himself, not altogether without a touch of surprise, considering his savage cruelty and unprincipled craft—to say nothing of the appalling calamity inflicted upon Rome by his soldiery in 1084—among the glorified spirits enumerated by Cacciaguida in the Heaven of Mars. The redeeming feature of his career in Dante's eyes no doubt was that his arms, like those of the other warriors in whose company he is found, were employed against the infidel Saracens in Italy and elsewhere. (Compare the allusions in *Inf.* xxvii. 85-90, and *Par.* xv. 142-145, to the shortcomings of the existing Popes in this respect.)

After Roger 'the Great Count' comes Roger the first King of Sicily, of whom also Dante makes no mention. He was the founder of the noble Cathedral of Cefalù, the castle of which place has (as we shall see presently) much interest for us in connexion with one whom Dante pursues with his bitterest hatred and contempt—'il Ciotto di Gerusalemme.' King Roger was also the father of Constance, referred to by Dante as the wife of Henry VI and mother of the still more celebrated Frederic II. King Roger was succeeded by his son, William I, commonly called 'the Bad,' and he again by his son, William II, known as 'the Good,' the builder of the glorious Cathedral of Monreale, where his

extorting concessions from the rival candidates. A notable instance occurs in the case of the next preceding Pope, Honorius II, in his dealings with the Saxon Lothair and the 'Anti-Emperors' Frederic and Conrad of Suabia (uncles of Barbarossa). So again, a little later on, we find Frederic Barbarossa taking advantage of the schism between Alexander III and the Anti-Pope Victor IV, and the Pope Innocent III interfering for his own ends in the disputes between Otto of Brunswick, Philip of Suabia, and Frederic (afterwards Emperor).

sarcophagus stands in the south transept, side by side with that of his father. Dante pays a splendid tribute to his memory, when he selects him with four others (*viz.* Trajan, Hezekiah, Constantine, and the Trojan Rhipeus) to form the eyebrow of the Imperial eagle in the Heaven of Jupiter.

‘E quel che vedi nell’ arco declivo
 Guglielmo fu, cui quella terra plora
 Che piange Carlo e Federico vivo.
 Ora conosce come s’ innamora
 Lo ciel del giusto rege, ed al sembiante
 Del suo fulgore il fa vedere ancora!’ (*Par.* xx. 61-66.)

William the Good died in 1189, leaving no children. The people, with the support of the Pope, having crowned as king Tancred, Count of Lecce, an illegitimate son of a brother of Constance, a war of succession ensued, after which the kingdom passed to the Emperor Henry VI of Germany, son of ‘il buon Barbarossa,’ as Dante (perhaps in irony²) styles him in *Purg.* xviii. 119, Henry being the husband of Constance, the daughter and only surviving child of King Roger. She is thus described in the epitaph upon her tomb in the Cathedral of Palermo:—

‘Constantiam Imperatricem, et Reginam Sicilie,
 Regie Northmannorum Stirpis ultimam,
 Hoc habet monumentum.’

She is introduced by Dante in Paradise in the Heaven of the Moon, together with his own connexion, Piccarda Donati, as one of those whose vows of maidenhood had been un-

¹ ‘He whom thou seest on the downward slope (of the eagle’s brow) was William, whom that land mourns, which now laments Charles and Frederic living. Now he knows how beloved of heaven is the righteous king, and by his radiant semblance still makes that appear.’

² I have said ‘perhaps in irony,’ since it is often so explained. I do not however think this is meant, nor do any of the older Commentators so understand it. This notion seems to me to transfer the modern judgement of Barbarossa anachronistically to the time of Dante. To the mediaeval mind he was a typical hero, and even in some respects semi-mythical, like our King Arthur. Besides (like Frederic II and Manfred) he had a singular power of inspiring admiration and even devotion. Dante might well think of him as a grand embodiment of the imperial ideal.

fulfilled through the violence of others. In the case of the 'great Constance'—'*la gran Costanza*' as Dante calls her—she had been, so to speak, 'interned' in a convent, as a milder step than putting her to death, by her worthless half-brother, William the Bad, in consequence of a prophecy that she would prove the ruin of the Norman kingdom. Thence, according to the story, she was forcibly abducted through the machinations of Barbarossa, that she might marry his son Henry, many years her junior, and so be the means of adding Sicily to the dominions of the Empire¹. This at least was the story current in Dante's time, though it is now supposed to be a malignant Guelfic invention to darken the fame of the Imperial family. The language in which she is described by Dante is well known—

'Quest' è la luce della gran Costanza,
Che del secondo vento di Soave
Generò il terzo, e l' ultima possanza².'

(*Par.* iii. 118-120.)

The three 'Suabian blasts' are, of course, Frederic Barbarossa, Henry VI, and Frederic II. In these last words, *ultima possanza*, Dante expresses his contempt for the degenerate successors of the Great Frederic, who had not set foot in Italy for more than fifty years, and so 'the garden of the

¹ Boccaccio, *Comento*, Lez. 41 (ii. p. 239), repeats the story of her being a nun, but states that she was married to Henry by a dispensation of the Church. He makes the surprising statement that she was already fifty-six years of age! He also wrongly describes her as daughter of William the Good, which moreover would be absurdly inconsistent with the age he attributes to her. She is generally said to have been thirty-one and Henry twenty-three at the time of their marriage. (See Balzani's *Popes and the Hohenstaufen*, p. 104.) Fuller (*Holy War*, iv. 20) refers to the 'almost miraculous manner' of Frederic's birth, 'Constantia his mother bearing him when well-nigh sixty years of age. But (he adds) both in Scripture and other writers we may see the sons of long-barren mothers to have been fruitful in famous achievements.' Grave doubts were cast upon the genuineness of her son Frederic, and very strange and extreme precautions are said to have been taken to guard against the possibility of a supposititious child, the issues at stake being so vast.

² 'This is the light of the great Constance, who of the second Suabian blast brought forth the third, him that was the last ruler.'

Empire had become a desert' (see *Purg.* vi. 105). Every one will remember his passionate appeal to 'Alberto Tedesco' in *Purg.* vi. The same idea as to Frederic II being the last of the Emperors is repeated and amplified in *Conv.* IV. iii. 39, where Dante again speaks of 'Federigo di Soave' as '*ultimo* Imperadore de' Romani,' and then he adds this explanation:—'*ultimo*, dico, per rispetto al tempo presente, non ostante che Ridolfo e Adolfo e Alberto poi eletti sieno, appresso la sua morte e de' suoi discendenti.' Dante would recognize none of these, since they had not been crowned at Rome (see Essay I. *supra*, pp. 32, 33).

We now pass on to the central figure of Sicilian history at this period, or, as we might say, of any period, and indeed one of the most remarkable figures of mediaeval and even of universal history, the great Emperor Frederic II, 'stupor mundi,' 'the wonder of the world,' as his contemporaries, not without reason, loved to style him. In him, through the marriage of Constance, daughter of Roger, with Henry, son of Barbarossa, the noble and in many respects diverse qualities of the two great races of Hauteville and Hohenstaufen were united. He is concisely described by Giov. Villani, as 'universale in tutte le cose.' This 'universality' is especially remarkable in the combination of qualities which seem opposite and incompatible. He was a man as great in literature as in arms; no less distinguished besides as a civil administrator and a jurist, and as a patron and lover of science, art and learning of every kind¹; a man who astonished the world at one time by his prodigious activity, at another by sloth and luxury worthy of an Oriental monarch²; a crusader, and, what is more, a crusader who

¹ 'The University of Naples was founded by Frederic II, and liberally endowed. . . . He made large collections of books in the East, and employed learned men in translating from Arabic and Greek into Latin, among them Michael Scot the so-called magician.' [See *Inf.* xx. 116.] . . . 'Sculpture, painting, architecture, music and poetry were patronized by him, and one may say that the Italian language was fashioned at his Court.' (Mrs. Ross. *Land of Manfred*, p. 42.)

² Tacitus might almost be drawing the great Emperor's portrait in the following description of the ancient Germans:—

'Quotiens bella non ineunt, multum venatibus, plus per otium, transigunt,

actually succeeded in wresting Jerusalem from the infidel and assuming the crown in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre itself, and yet one who did not hesitate to employ Saracen mercenaries against the armies of the Pope, and who planted a permanent colony of these infidels at Nocera in Apulia¹: on the one hand a fierce persecutor of heretics², on the other a man whose life and conversation laid him open to the common reputation of being a sceptic, if not a professed infidel; one who trembled at times before the Papal anathema, and yet finds his appropriate place, at least in the judgement of Dante, with the Epicureans and heretics

‘Che l’ anima col corpo morta fanno.’ (*Inf.* x. 15.)

The passage which I have quoted recalls at once to our minds that most striking episode in *Inf.* x, where Dante finds the great Farinata in the circle of the Heretics, who were lying in their ponderous tombs like those of the ancient cemetery at Arles, and, as we might add, like that in which Frederic himself now lies in the Cathedral of Palermo; and where that proud spirit (Farinata), at the close of their interview, says that more than a thousand lie around him, but two only does he deign to mention:—

‘Qua dentro è lo secondo Federico
E il Cardinale, e degli altri mi taccio.’ (ll. 119, 120.)

Another allusion to Frederic occurs, as is generally admitted, though it has been sometimes disputed, in *Purg.* xvi. 117. Dante is there lamenting, by the mouth of Marco Lombardo, the degeneracy of the Lombards, and this is attributed to the ‘strife’ which ‘Frederic had there.’ Things were not thus

‘Prima che Federico avesse briga.’

dediti somno ciboque, fortissimus quisque ac bellicosissimus nihil agens, . . . mira diversitate naturae, quum iidem homines sic ament inertiam et oderint quietem’ (*Germania*, c. xv).

¹ In allusion to this, Charles of Anjou contemptuously called Manfred ‘the Sultan of Nocera.’

² As Milman says, he was ‘a persecutor of the worst kind—a persecutor without bigotry’ (*L. C.* vi. p. 267).

Some have contended that the reference is to Frederic Barbarossa, partly because he was more conspicuously occupied with Lombardy than his grandson the second Frederic¹; and partly, it would seem, from a sentimental feeling that Dante would not thus have laid the whole blame for the loss of 'valore e cortesia' on one whom in these respects he so much admired as Frederic II. To this we may reply, however: (i) The old Commentators seem unanimously to explain the passage as referring to Frederic II. (ii) In fact, in 1236-1239, after the suppression of the rebellion of his son Henry, in which the Lombard cities were deeply implicated, and under the pretext that his object was to suppress heresy, Frederic did wreak a very signal vengeance on the Lombard towns, and to this Dante probably here refers. (iii) Owing to the vigorous opposition of Gregory IX, the 'briga' or strife between Pope and Emperor was then centred in Lombardy, and Dante's words (as Scartazzini points out) do not necessarily throw all the blame on the Emperor. Although 'Federico avesse briga,' and though the consequences of that 'briga' or 'contention' are alleged to be disastrous, it does not follow that he was wholly to blame for its existence or for its origin.

Again, in *Inf.* xxiii. 66, Dante refers to the Emperor Frederic's alleged barbarous treatment of traitors, whose heads he is said to have enclosed in a covering of lead which was then gradually melted by the application of heat. The heavy gilded leaden hoods of the Hypocrites in the sixth Bolgia were such, says Dante, that those of Frederic would have seemed light as straw by comparison. Here, as no doubt in some other cases, Dante follows a tradition which the verdict of history has rejected, this being a malicious invention of some of the Emperor's numerous enemies. It would not indeed be possible to clear him in other matters of acts of cruelty, for which, however, the age rather than the individual should bear the chief blame.

In connexion with Frederic II we must mention the

¹ See *Purg.* xviii. 120, 'Di cui dolente ancor Milan ragiona,' in reference to the utter destruction of Milan by Barbarossa in 1162.

touching and tragic episode of his great Chancellor, Pier delle Vigne, in *Inf.* xiii. 58, &c. This remarkable man was (as Dr. Barlow writes) 'poet¹, orator, lawyer, and diplomatist, and he had become the depositary of Frederic's mind, almost the keeper of his conscience, as well as the dispenser of his authority.' Indeed, Milman (*L. C.* vi. 263) goes so far as to say that in his internal administration 'all the acts of Frederic were attributed to his Chancellor.' The enormous power and influence thus wielded by the Chancellor, combined with the fact that he was of humble origin, and had risen to eminence entirely by the force of genius, marked him as the butt of that envy which, as Dante says, is the curse of all Courts (*Inf.* xiii. 64-69)². A few lines above Dante has described, in well-known words, Piero's exclusive and undisputed sway over the mind of Frederic (see ll. 58-61), and has put into his mouth a declaration of his unswerving fidelity and devotion to his master. In 1249, the year before Frederic's death, a conspiracy to poison him was discovered. Suspicion was directed against Pier delle Vigne; indeed it has even been suggested that the whole plot was got up with the design of compassing his fall. No documentary evidence has been found in any way implicating him, nor can any plausible reason be even suggested for such treachery on his part. There is something very touching in the way in which Dante makes 'quel magnanimo' offer a spontaneous and generous tribute to the worth of the man by whom he had been so deeply wronged and so cruelly treated.

'Vi giuro che giammai non ruppi fede

Al mio signor, *che fu d' onor sì degno*³.' (ll. 74, 75.)

He utters no reproach, though Frederic had, on slight and baseless suspicion, not only cast him down headlong from his high position, but had barbarously put out his eyes, and

¹ He is commonly said to have been the first composer of the Italian sonnet.

² Again compare Tacitus, *Agricola*, c. 5 *fin.*, 'quibus (sc. temporibus) sinistra erga eminentes interpretatio, nec minus periculum ex magna fama quam ex mala.' The fate of Pier delle Vigne is curiously like that of Pierre de la Brosse, whose character is similarly rehabilitated by Dante in *Purg.* vi. 19-24.

³ 'I swear to you that never broke I faith to my liege lord who was so worthy to be honoured.'

thrown him into prison, where the impending dread of a death of torture and ignominy impelled him to take his own life by dashing his head against a pillar,

‘Credendo col morir fuggir disdegno¹.’ (l. 71.)

It is on this account that the stern justice of Dante, while vindicating his character for faithfulness, condemns him to the eternal penalty of the suicide.

The circumstances of his fall remind one in many respects of that of Wolsey; and our own great poet has shown like consummate art with Dante in the language which he puts into the mouth of the fallen Cardinal at his interview with Cromwell; e.g. :—

‘Seek the king :
That sun I pray may never set.
Some little memory of me will stir him—
I know his noble nature—not to let
Thy hopeful service perish too. Good Cromwell,
Neglect him not.’

There is much more in the same generous spirit. For another parallel in history we might recall the circumstances of the fall of Boethius at the court of Theodoric.

There are two occasions in his other works in which Dante speaks of the same great Emperor from his literary side. One is in the Canzone to the fourth Trattato of the *Convito*, where he refers (according to his own gloss in c. iii) to a definition given by Frederic of *gentilezza* or *nobiltà*, viz. that it consisted in ‘antica ricchezza e bei costumi’—‘ancestral wealth united with a well-ordered character.’ Dante, after an elaborate apology for venturing to criticize an opinion given by one in the Emperor’s position, whom he also describes *personally* in *Conv.* IV. x. 59 as ‘loico e cherico grande’—such criticism somewhat savouring of irreverence (see viii. 85 *seqq.*)—elaborately and at much length argues (xi–xiv) that neither *time* nor *wealth* (referring to the two words ‘antica ricchezza’) can be ingredients in nobleness. This passage has a further interest in that Dante appears to

¹ ‘Thinking to escape indignity by death.’

maintain a view not quite consistent with that which is admitted and even advocated in *De Mon.* II. iii. 14 *seqq.*

Finally, we have the important reference in *De Vulg. Eloq.* I. xii. 20, where Dante traces the origin of all Italian poetry to the enlightened example and patronage of 'illustres heroes Federicus Caesar et bene genitus eius Manfredus.' After a splendid eulogium of the life and tastes of these great princes, he observes that, 'quia regale solium erat Sicilia,' all the early poetic efforts of Italians generally were described as *Sicilian* literature, a custom which he adds still prevails, and he declares that posterity will not be able to alter it, notwithstanding the degeneracy of the miserable princes who have succeeded to the Sicilian throne. This gives him the opportunity for a characteristic outburst of indignation against his bitter enemies, Charles the Lamb, and the King Frederic II of the Aragon dynasty in Sicily, of whom we shall say more presently. 'Quid nunc personat tuba novissimi Federici? quid tintinnabulum secundi Caroli?' and a good deal more in the same strain.

The Emperor Frederic II was three times married, or rather four times, if we include his deathbed marriage with his mistress, Bianca Lancia, the mother of the celebrated Manfred and of the ill-fated Enzo¹, the best beloved of all Frederic's sons. His eldest son, Henry, who rebelled against his father, died before him, in 1235. One legitimate son survived and succeeded him, Conrad, whose brief reign of four years was terminated by his death, aged twenty-six, in

¹ Frederic married Enzo to Adelasia, widow of Ubaldo Visconti and heiress of a great portion of Sardinia. He then proclaimed Enzo King of Sardinia. Enzo, fighting gallantly as Frederic's Vicar in North Italy, was captured at Bologna, in 1249, at the early age of twenty-four, and his hopeless imprisonment in that city, where he languished for twenty-three long years, nearly broke his father's heart. Michel Zanche, who is branded with infamy by Dante as a *barattiere* in *Inf.* xxii. 88 and xxxiii. 144, obtained the government of Logodoro in Sardinia by marrying, according to one account, Adelasia, divorced wife of Enzo; according to another (Landino, &c.), it was by marrying the mother of Enzo, Bianca Lancia. This is less probable, as it does not appear how he would thus have obtained a claim on Sardinia. Pietro di Dante says that Michel Zanche had a daughter Adelasia whom he married to Branca d'Oria. It will be remembered that these traitors are mentioned together in *Inf.* xxxiii.

1254. He was the father of the ill-fated Conradin, whose barbarous execution at the early age of sixteen, together with his young cousin Frederic of Austria, on October 29, 1268, two months after the disastrous battle of Tagliacozzo (see *Inf.* xxviii. 17), extinguished the house of Hohenstaufen, and branded with eternal infamy the memory of the odious Charles of Anjou¹. Every one will remember the terrible list of crimes of which Dante accuses Charles (some perhaps with doubtful justice) in *Purg.* xx. 64-9, driving home, so to speak, each terrible accusation with the bitterly ironical and thrice-repeated words 'per ammenda.' The passage ends thus—

'per ammenda
Vittima fe' di Curradino, e poi
Ripinse al ciel Tommaso, per ammenda².'

The last line refers to the alleged death by poison of S. Thomas Aquinas on his way to the Council held by Gregory X at Lyons in 1274, the fact of which poisoning, to say nothing of the implication in it of Charles of Anjou, is more than doubtful.

The career of Manfred, whose character and genius and adventurous life very much resembled those of his father, called forth (as we have already seen) the enthusiastic admiration of Dante, and forms the subject of one of the most beautiful passages in the whole of the *Divina Commedia* in *Purg.* iii. Manfred was first the guardian, then the supplanter, and, as some said, the murderer, of his legitimate half-brother Conrad, who succeeded in Sicily on the death

¹ That no circumstance of horror might be wanting to this, one of the most touching and tragical events in history, it is related that Charles was himself an actual spectator of the carrying out of this atrocious act of personal vengeance ! Tacitus mentions a similar circumstance as an aggravation of the cruel tyranny of Domitian as compared with that of Nero—'Nero tamen subtraxit oculos suos, iussisque scelera, non spectavit; praecipua sub Domitiano miseriarum pars erat videre et aspici' (*Agricola*, c. 45). This crime is thus characterized in a rhetorical and bombastic letter addressed by Peter of Aragon on his accession to the throne to his rival Charles of Anjou, in reply to a similar effusion which he had received from Charles: 'Tu vero, Nerone Neronior, et crudelior Saracenis, innocentem agnum in tuo reclusum carcere mortis iudicio subiecisti.' *Chronicon Siciliae*, cap. xl. in Martenè and Durand, *Thesaurus Novus Anecd.* vol. iii. p. 33.

² 'For amends made a victim of Conradin; and then thrust Thomas back to heaven, for amends.'

of his father Frederic. Other murders and crimes were popularly laid to his charge, to say nothing of the scarcely less formidable accusation, as times then were, of materialism and infidelity. To these and similar charges Dante probably alludes in the confession which he puts into Manfred's mouth (*Purg.* iii. 121), 'Orribil furon li peccati miei¹.' He then refers, in a passage of exquisite poetic beauty, to the tragic circumstances of Manfred's death at the fatal battle of Benevento², February 26, 1266, at the early age of thirty-four. The body of the king was with difficulty found beneath a heap of slain, and was buried beside the bridge, each soldier as he passed adding a stone to the mound, as at the burial of Absalom³—

'In co del ponte presso a Benevento,
Sotto la guardia della grave mora⁴.' (ll. 128-129.)

Thence it was torn by the Cardinal Archbishop of Cosenza, Bartolommeo Pignatelli, acting under the orders of Clement IV, and the remains were cast forth with indignity beyond the confines of the kingdom (see ll. 124-133). Then follows the truly magnificent passage in which Manfred declares that the unjust and tyrannical excommunication of the Church cannot finally quench the Eternal Father's love, though it *can* prolong the period during which those who have delayed repentance to the moment of death are debarred from the privilege of commencing their purgatorial pains. Hence he entreats Dante, when he returns to the

¹ We must not fail to draw attention to the skill and the delicacy with which the poet conceals the defect of Manfred's illegitimate birth, by causing him to announce himself as '*Nepote di Costanza Imperadrice*' (l. 113), the *grandson* of the Empress Constance, thus passing over his immediate parentage. (On the probable suggestion of this by a passage in Statius, see *Studies*, First Series, p. 253.)

² The treachery by which this battle was lost, and the triumph of the Angevin cause secured, is referred to by Dante in *Inf.* xxviii. 16:—

'A Ceperan, là dove fu bugiardo
Ciascun Pugliese.'

'At Ceperano, where every Apulian was a traitor.' It is singular that he substitutes *Ceperan* for *Benevento* here (see *Purg.* iii. 128); but (as Scartazzini notes) the confusion occurs in some of the chroniclers, by whom Dante was probably misled.

³ See 2 Sam. xviii. 17.

⁴ 'By the bridge-head at Benevento, under the shelter of the heavy mound.'

earth, first to inform his daughter, 'la buona Costanza,' what is his actual state—

'E dichì a lei il ver, s' altro si dice'¹ (l. 117):

that is, he is to tell her that he is not hopelessly condemned by the Papal sentence—that he is not in Hell but safely on his way to Purgatory—and next, that the period of his exclusion therefrom may be effectually shortened by her prayers. The whole episode is, as I have said, one of the most beautiful and touching in the poem².

It should be noted that this 'buona Costanza' (l. 143) is the third of the name³. (1) There was the daughter of Roger, wife of Henry, and mother of Frederic, to whom we have already referred, and who lies beside the three monarchs with whom she was thus connected in the Cathedral of Palermo. (2) There was Constance of Aragon, who was the first wife of Frederic II (dying in 1222) and the mother of a son Henry. She is also buried in the same chapel at Palermo. (3) A third Constance is the beloved daughter of Manfred, here referred to, whose marriage with Peter of Aragon caused him to be chosen King of Sicily after the bloody massacre of the Sicilian Vespers and the expulsion of the hated Angevins. This explains the title by which she is here described—

'Genitrice

Dell' onor di Sicilia e d' Aragona.' (ll. 115, 116.)

¹ 'Tell to her the truth (about me), if another tale is told.'

² It is a curious question to ask on what motive Dante thus asserts the ultimate salvation of Manfred. It is clear that he *could* have no authority for the statement here made of his repentance *in articulo mortis* (see ll. 119, 120). No one saw him fall, and his body could not be found for three days after the battle. Perhaps Dante, sharing in the almost magical enthusiasm which Manfred universally inspired, may have felt that such an one *could* not be lost. It is interesting to add that the case of Buonconte in *Purg.* v. 91-102 is precisely similar. Perhaps Dante may have wished to enforce by the example of such extreme instances the boundlessness of God's mercy, as he expresses this in *Purg.* iii. 121-3. These cases remind us of the Trooper's Epitaph:—

'Betwixt the stirrup and the ground

Mercy I sought, mercy I found.'

With this too we may compare the language which I have seen somewhere quoted from S. Augustine, though I have not been able to find the passage:

'Misericordia Domini inter pontem et fontem.'

³ See the Genealogical Table, *infra*, p. 302 a.

The persons thus referred to as 'the honour of Sicily and of Aragon' are Frederic II, King of Sicily at this time (i.e. 1300), and in fact from 1296-1337; and James II (surnamed the Just), now King of Aragon, and formerly for about ten years (1285-1295) King of Sicily in succession to his father, Peter.

One word more before we take leave of the glorious but ill-fated house whose inheritance was now passing away to strangers. It seems as if the Hohenstaufen might not inaptly be described as the Atridae of mediaeval history: the fateful family whose steps were dogged by a relentless Nemesis, a *δριμὺν ἀλάστωρ*, from generation to generation, till in the final tragedy on the scaffold at Naples—

ἑσχάτος ὑπὲρ
ρίζας ὁ τέτατο φάος ἐν . . . δόμοις,
κατ' αὖ νιν φοινία θεῶν τῶν
νεπτερόων ὁμᾶ κοπίς.²

(Soph. *Antig.* 599-602.)

The great Barbarossa was drowned in some nameless stream in Asia and buried in an unknown grave. His son Henry VI died at the early age of thirty-two, though considering the cruelty, ingratitude, and perfidy of his career, we need not much regret that it was a brief one. Frederic II had to suffer the rebellion of his firstborn, Henry, an Absalom in his family, who died aged about twenty-five; the capture and cruel imprisonment (terminated after twenty-three years only by his death) of his best beloved son Enzo; the treachery and desertion, real or supposed, of his most trusty friend and councillor in his later days; ending his own weary and restless life at the age of fifty-six, amidst disaster and defeat. The same relentless destiny pursued his family after his death. His son and successor Conrad died at twenty-six; the noble Manfred at thirty-four; the unhappy Conradin, last of all his race, perished on the scaffold at the tender age of sixteen. And so, though Frederic had been four times married, and had male issue by each marriage, yet 'in the next generation' (indeed less than twenty years after his death) 'his name was clean put out'.¹

¹ Fuller again quaintly remarks (*Holy War*, iv. 20): 'It is much that succession adventured in so many severall bottoms should miscarry.'

1248 ms
1.4.10
no -

We may pass over briefly the fourteen years of Angevin tyranny and misrule under which Sicily groaned, from the murder of Conradin to the terrible massacre of the Sicilian Vespers on Easter Tuesday, March 31, 1282. Dante makes reference to this startling event, which he would himself doubtless well remember, having been seventeen years old at the time. When he meets his own friend Carlo Martello¹ (son of Charles the lame) in Paradise (see Canto viii)—the *only personal friend*, I believe, whom Dante has honoured with a place in Paradise (*sup.* p. 219)—he makes him say that but for their misrule the members of his house would still be reigning in Sicily :—

‘Se mala signoria, che sempre accora
Li popoli suggetti, non avesse
Mosso Palermo a gridar: Mora, Mora!’
(*Par.* viii. 73-75.)

The rebellion which culminated in this terrible outbreak appears to have been fomented for two or three years previously both by Peter of Aragon and by Pope Nicholas III, though the latter died a few months before it came to a head. It is narrated by G. Villani and others that

¹ Carlo Martello in *Par.* viii. 58 *seqq.* declares (1) that he would, if he had lived, have been Count of Provence. This was by right of his grandmother Beatrice, daughter of Raymond Berenger (‘who had four daughters, and each of them a queen’ as Dante says in *Par.* vi. 133); she was the wife of Charles of Anjou. (2) Also King of Apulia (l. 61), in succession to his father Charles II (the lame). (3) That he was already King of Hungary (l. 64). This was in right of his mother, daughter of Stephen V of Hungary. He never, however, succeeded in securing the throne. (4) That his descendants would now, but for the Angevin misrule, be looked forward to by Sicily as her future kings (his father Charles being in 1300 still living). He describes them as ‘born through himself from Charles and Rudolf’ (l. 72). For Carlo Martello having married the daughter of the Emperor Rudolf, his descendants would have represented both the Guelph and Ghibelline interests. A similar matrimonial alliance was brought about later by Boniface VIII, in 1297, when Iolante, daughter of Constance, was married to Robert of Calabria, son of Charles II. He thus hoped to combine the Aragonese and Angevin claims to the crown of Sicily, setting aside the rights of King Frederic II. The Pope, having failed to persuade Frederic to abandon or barter away his claims (see *inf.* p. 298), proceeded in due course to excommunicate him.

² ‘If evil lordship, which always exasperates the subject peoples, had not moved Palermo to cry out “Die, Die!”’

this Pope, whom Dante describes (in allusion to his being of the Orsini family) as—

‘figliuol dell’ orsa,
Cupido sì per avanzar gli orsatti
Che su l’ avere, e qui me misi in borsa¹’

(*Inf.* xix. 70-72),

—that this Pope endeavoured, among others of the schemes of nepotism with which he is here charged, to marry his niece into the royal Angevin family. The refusal of Charles of Anjou to permit this aroused the wrath of the Pontiff², who entrusted a very large sum of money to Giovanni da Procida to induce Peter of Aragon and the Eastern Emperor Palaeologus to stir up rebellion in Sicily against Charles. To this also Dante refers in *Inf.* xix. 98-99:—

‘E guarda ben la mal tolta moneta
Ch’ esser ti fece contra Carlo ardito³’

After the Sicilian Vespers, a new chapter opens in Sicilian history with the accession of the Aragonese dynasty, whose earlier members are very frequently referred to in the pages of Dante.

But perhaps before we pass on we ought to complete the history, so far as Dante touches upon it, of the expelled Angevins, i.e. of Charles I, or Charles of Anjou (as he is commonly called), and his son Charles II, or Charles the lame, on whom in perhaps ampler measure than any one else Dante pours forth his vials of mingled wrath and contempt.

Moreover, it ought perhaps to have been explained before how this family came to have any claims upon Sicily at all. When Manfred’s power was at its height, and Pope Alexander IV, driven from Rome, had died at Viterbo in

¹ ‘A son of the She-Bear, so eager to advance the Bear-cubs, that above I put wealth, and here myself in a pouch.’

² This personal quarrel is a curious repetition of one that occurred about half a century before (1239) between the then Pope and Emperor, Gregory IX and Frederic II. The latter, when excommunicated, declared that it was solely because he had refused to agree to a marriage between a niece of the Pope and his own son Enzo. The Pope replied that the Emperor was a liar, and that the marriage had been proposed by Frederic and declined by himself. (See Balzani, *Popes and the Hohenstaufen*, p. 199.)

³ ‘And guard well the ill-gotten money that made thee to be bold against Charles.’

1261, a Frenchman, Pantaléon, was elected Pope under the title of Urban IV. His only hope of finding any counterpoise to the power of Manfred was in the help of his native France¹. He therefore offered the crown of Apulia and Sicily to Saint Louis, either for himself, his brother, or one of his sons². Saint Louis would take no part in such an act of usurpation, but, though he did not actually approve, he did not formally refuse his assent to his brother, Charles of Anjou, embarking on such an enterprise, being not sorry at any rate to rid his own kingdom of his objectionable and compromising presence. Charles now eagerly accepted the Pope's offer, and entered Italy in 1265 (see *Purg.* xx. 67). He was vigorously supported by Urban IV and by his successor, also a Frenchman, Clement IV—the Pope who wreaked such savage vengeance on the corpse of Manfred (see *Purg.* iii. 124)—and though opposed by the Orsini Pope, Nicholas III, found support once more from his French successor, Martin IV. The Angevin claim to Sicily thus rested upon nothing but the arbitrary will of the Pope, claiming to 'rule in the kingdom of men, and to give it to whomsoever he will' (Dan. iv. 25).

As to Dante's estimate of Charles of Anjou, we have already seen how he enumerates his crimes by the mouth of Hugh Capet in *Purg.* xx. 64 *seqq.* There is also an interesting passing allusion in the graphic episode of Pro-

¹ See Milman, *L. C.* vi. 361.

² But before this Innocent IV had initiated this policy. In pursuit of it, in 1253 he simply 'hawked about' the kingdom of Sicily, offering it, while its legitimate king (the Emperor Conrad IV) was still living, (1) to Charles of Anjou, for whom it was declined by those in authority in France in the absence of Louis IX; (2) next, to Richard Duke of Cornwall, who also refused it; (3) next, to Edmund Duke of Lancaster (act. 8!), second son of Henry III. Henry having accepted it, disregarding the fact that his own nephew Henry, half brother of Conrad, was royal vicar in Sicily, the Pope proclaimed a sort of 'crusade' in Sicily in favour of Edmund. But as Conrad died in 1254, leaving as his heir Conradin, an infant of two years, the Pope, thinking Sicily would no longer prove a difficulty to him, with characteristic perfidy entirely ignored his promises to Henry III. on the strength of which he had extorted from him a large amount of money, and calmly recognized the (conveniently distant) rights of the child Conradin, the Sicilians meanwhile to take the oath of homage to the Church.

venzan Salvani in *Purg.* xi, who humbled his pride by publicly begging in the Campo di Siena¹ in order to collect the ransom needed to rescue his friend Vigna, who had been captured fighting for the unhappy Conradin on the fatal field of Tagliacozzo, and was now *nella prigion di Carlo* (l. 137). The most interesting reference, however, is that where Dante places him, not, as we should expect, *in basso Inferno*, but in the flower-decked Valley of the Kings, in Purgatory, or rather in Ante-Purgatory, among those who have neglected and deferred to the last moment of life their acts of contrition. Here, again, Dante shows his strict and impartial justice towards one whom he deeply hated, and whom, no doubt, he would have 'delivered over to Satan' without overmuch regret. For it is recorded by G. Villani (vii. 95) how Charles, immediately before his death, embraced the crucifix and uttered a humble prayer of contrition. It is also averred (writes Milman) by the Papal writers, 'that he made a most Christian end.' Thus, like Manfred, Buonconte, and others, he earned a title to come at last,

'Quando che sia, alle beate genti.'

Another remarkable feature of this scene is that Dante represents the two mortal enemies, Charles of Anjou and Peter of Aragon, as singing together in harmony—see *Purg.* vii. 112–114:—

'Quel che par sì membruto [i. e. Peter of Aragon], e che s' accorda
Cantando con colui dal maschio naso' [i. e. Charles of Anjou]².

Thus were these lifelong foes at last united in their penitential discipline, 'met in the milder shades of Purgatory³.'

¹ That same 'Campo' di Siena, which preserved its name unchanged down to our own days, and which, only within recent memory, has had its historic name changed to the inevitable 'Piazza Vittorio Emanuele'!

² 'That one who seems so stalwart and who is singing in accord with him of the manly nose.' A few lines further on Charles is spoken of as 'il Nasuto' (l. 124). The following is Gregorovius's description of a statue of Charles of Anjou still remaining in the Palace of the Senator on the Capitol:—'The head is large and powerful, the face fixed and severe, the nose huge, the features hard' &c. (v. p. 456).

³ There is another instance of the union of those who were foes upon earth, a little earlier in this same Canto. Rudolf of Hapsburg and Ottocar king of Bohemia were mortal foes, and the latter, who was killed in battle fighting

The son of Charles of Anjou, Carlo il Zoppo—i.e. Charles the Lamé, whom Dante with savage irony describes as 'il Ciotto di Gerusalemme,' 'the Cripple of Jerusalem,' since he claimed among his other titles that of 'King of Jerusalem'¹—was a prisoner in the Castle of Cefalù at the time of his father's death. This most interesting and little visited spot deserves a few words of description. It is a small town beautifully situated on the north coast of Sicily, about thirty miles east of Palermo. The modern town—not undeservedly called by its inhabitants 'la piacentissima'—with its tiny harbour filled with the picturesque lateen-rigged fishing and trading boats, occupies a narrow fringe of shore behind which the rocks rise precipitously immediately at the back of the Cathedral, which crowns the gentle slope on which the town itself stands. This building, most interesting from its architectural features and its gorgeous wealth of mosaics—nowhere, perhaps, surpassed except in the incomparable Cathedral of Monreale—was founded by King Roger, and once contained the massive sarcophagus now at Palermo, enclosing his remains, as well as that (which was then a cenotaph) in which Frederic II is now interred. The precipice rising at the back of the Cathedral is inaccessible, except where, a little to the west, it becomes slightly less precipitous, and then, halfway up the still extremely steep slope, are

against Rudolf in 1278, is represented by Dante as assisting and comforting him in his penitence. See ll. 94–100. And we might set as a pendant to these graceful pictures of the union of enemies in the healing κόλασις of Purgatory, the continued association of the friends and partners in guilt, Ulysses and Diomedes, in the avenging τιμωρία of Hell—

'così insieme

Alla vendetta vanno, come all' ira' (*Inf.* xxvi. 56, 57).

¹ I must take leave to quote Fuller once more. He says that there are more claimants to the title of King of Jerusalem than to any other titular dignity whatever. He enumerates no fewer than twenty-six such claimants. He then quaintly proceeds—'And now how would a Herald sweat with scouring over these time-rustie titles, to show whence these Princes derived their severall claims, and in whom the right resteth at this day? and when his work is done, who should pay him his wages? . . . we may beleve that by matches and under-matches some of these titles may reside in private gentlemen . . . And what wonder? seeing within fourteen generations the royall blood of the Kings of Judah ran in the veins of plain Joseph, a painfull carpenter' (*Holy War*, v. 29).

found the scanty ruins of the ancient Cephaloedion, including a fine gateway, and one very curious fragment which combines the remains of a Greek temple, a Roman dwelling, and an early Christian church. Far above this again, at a height looking almost unapproachable, is the ancient Acropolis, crowned with the extensive and picturesque ruins of a Saracenic castle. There it was that, at the time of his father's death, the perfidious and worthless Charles II, hitherto known as the Prince of Salerno, and chiefly, perhaps, remembered by posterity, thanks to Dante's contemptuous description, as 'the Cripple of Jerusalem,' was languishing in seemingly hopeless captivity. He had been taken prisoner at the great naval victory gained by Roger Loria, in 1284, over the fleet of Philip the Bold, then assisting his uncle Charles of Anjou. This is that Philip who is commemorated by Dante in *Purg.* vii as 'quel Nasetto'¹ che . . . morì fuggendo e disfiando il giglio,' and who is identified three lines below as 'Padre . . . del mal di Francia,' i.e. of Philip the Fair (*Purg.* vii. 105-109). Moreover, the capture of Charles at this battle is itself referred to by Dante in *Purg.* xx. 79-81, where he is thus described:—

'L' altro, che già uscì preso di nave,
Veggio vender sua figlia e patteggiarne
Come fanno i corsar dell' altre schiave'²

The meaning of this fierce allusion is explained to be that he gave in marriage his daughter, Beatrice ('giovanissima'), to the old Marquis Azzo VIII of Este³ in return for a large

¹ There is a *lect. fals.* here, 'Nasuto.' Dante's epithet of 'Nasetto' is illustrated by the nickname 'Philippe le Camus' ('snub-nosed'), by which he is sometimes known. Compare the expression 'with camuse nose' in Chaucer, 'Reves Tale,' ll. 14, 54. Witte says that the propriety of the description can be seen in his effigy at Narbonne.

² 'I see the other, who a prisoner late
Had stept on shore, exposing to the mart
His daughter, whom he bargains for, as do
The Corsairs for their slaves.' (CARY.)

³ This Marchese Azzo da Este is the same scoundrel whom Dante brands (1) as the murderer of his father (*Inf.* xii. 111): (2) as the murderer, by treachery, of Jacopo del Cassero (*Purg.* v. 77): (3) as the seducer of 'la Ghisolabella' (*Inf.* xviii. 56); in addition to his part in the atrocious act here

sum of money. In 1288 Charles was released from the captivity referred to in this passage by the intercession of our Edward I (whose connexion with both the rival houses of Aragon and Anjou enabled him to mediate between them with effect) on condition of his taking the most solemn oaths to renounce all claims to the kingdom of Sicily. These oaths, it is needless to add, were not observed. No sooner was Charles free, than the Pope (Nicholas IV) annulled the treaty which had been written by his own notary, absolved Charles from his oaths, and crowned him king of Apulia and Sicily (Milman, *L. C.* vi. p. 449). Charles had, however, been compelled, in order to secure his own escape, to give as hostages three of his sons, whose consequent imprisonment lasted for seven years, i.e. till 1295. One of these, his third son, Robert, is accused by Dante of having learnt during his detention in Spain to copy

‘L’ avara povertà di Catalogna’ (*Par.* viii. 77);

adding that he thus became the niggardly son of a liberal father (l. 82):

‘La sua natura, che di larga parca
Discese.’

This admission is at first sight rather surprising, for two reasons: first, Dante seems to go out of his way here to attribute a virtue to Charles the Lamè (see however *Par.* xix. 128, which we shall discuss presently); and secondly, it is the virtue of freedom from avarice, the very fault of which he distinctly accuses him in the bitter passage first quoted from *Purg.* xx. Also in the three lines next following, he apostrophizes the power of avarice, which could induce a man thus to traffic with his own flesh and blood. But this may be perhaps another instance of Dante’s fairness even to his chief enemies, since G. Villani (viii. 108) says of Charles that he was ‘uno de’ piu larghi, e graziosi signori

referred to. He was still living in 1300 (d. 1308), so that Dante could not have the satisfaction of saying that he had found him in Hell. But he has done his best for him in default of this, by ‘putting his name among his other notes,’ as he grimly says in *Inf.* xxxii. 93.

... ma per altre virtù fu di poco valore.' It may be added too that 'larghezza' in a certain sense is not inconsistent with 'avarizia,' even as 'rapaciousness and prodigality' are (as Gibbon says in his character of Constantine) 'opposite yet reconcileable vices.' Another point to be noticed is that the words occur in the mouth of Charles's own son. Compare a similar case noticed below, p. 299.

It would carry us too far to pursue his history further. Suffice it to say that Charles never succeeded in obtaining the throne of Sicily, though he fought long for it against the Aragonese king, Frederic II, of whom more presently. To the disastrous effects of this war Dante refers in *Par.* xx. 63, when he says that Sicily mourns for the death of William the Good, even as it now mourns that Charles and Frederic still live.

'Cui quella terra plora
Che piange Carlo e Federico vivo.'

We may set beside this passage Dante's vigorous denunciation (in *Conv.* iv. 6) of the evil rulers of Italy, among whom he signalizes these two again by name: 'E dico a voi, *Carlo e Federigo regi*, è a voi altri principi e tiranni,' &c. He then warns them that it were better 'to fly low like the swallow, rather than like a kite to wheel in lofty flight over the foulest objects.' In a similar spirit, in that well-known passage of *Par.* vi. 100, &c., in which Dante with judicial impartiality declares of Guelf and Ghibelline that it is hard to say which is the more at fault—

'Sì che forte a veder è chi più falli'—

he justifies his condemnation of the former by denouncing the conduct of

'esto Carlo novello
Coi Guelfi suoi,'

who are striving to beat down the 'pubblico segno' of the Imperial Eagle, while the Ghibellines appropriate it to serve their own factious aims.

But it is high time that we dismissed this phantom king of Sicily, and we will do so by a citation of the passage

in which Dante himself finally takes leave of him, including him in his black list of iniquitous rulers from various countries in *Par.* xx, and concisely summing up his character thus:—

‘Vedrassi al Ciotto di Gerusalemme
Segnata con un I la sua bontade,
Quando il contrario segnerà un’ emme¹.’

(*Par.* xix. 127–129.)

This ‘I,’ or single virtue, may possibly be that of liberality, which, as we have seen, in one passage (viz. *Par.* viii. 82) Dante seems to allow to him; or it may be only in rhetorical contrast with ‘M,’ i.e. *Mille*, or a thousand, which are the number of his faults.

There is another passage not as yet noticed in which Dante has displayed his contempt for this same personage. In *Purg.* vii. 127–129, in a passage of considerable obscurity, he says that this Charles was as much inferior to his father, Charles of Anjou (and we know how low an opinion Dante had of him), as the latter was to Peter of Aragon.

‘Tant’ è del seme suo minor la pianta,
Quanto più che Beatrice e Margherita
Costanza di marito ancor si vanta.’

‘So much is the plant inferior to its seed, as much as, more than Beatrice and Margaret, Constance still prides herself on her husband.’ In this difficult passage, Dante in effect says (going back to l. 124)—‘My words apply to Charles of Anjou (“Nasuto”) as well as to Peter of Aragon, both of whom have degenerate offspring. And Peter (husband of Constance) is as much better than Charles, and his brother Louis (husbands of Beatrice and Margaret), as Charles is himself better than his son Charles the Lame.’ Now we know that of Peter, Dante had a very high estimate (l. 114), and of Charles of Anjou a very low one. This gives us a measure of the very large further descent in the scale before the level of Charles II’s demerits is reached². Beatrice and

¹ ‘The cripple of Jerusalem shall see his goodness marked with a unit, while the opposite an M shall mark.’

² Two further points call for remark in this passage: (1) In l. 127 there is a *var. lect.* ‘miglior’ for ‘minor,’ which, however, has but slender MS. support. The meaning of the passage will be the same, only that in that case

Margaret were daughters of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence (for which see *supra*, p. 287 n.); and Constance was the daughter of Manfred ('la mia buona Costanza' of *Purg.* iii. 143) who was still living, i.e. in 1300, though her husband had died fifteen years before. Hence '*ancor si vanta*' in l. 129.

After the Sicilian Vespers and the consequent expulsion of the Angevins and all their belongings, Peter of Aragon was called to the vacant throne as being the husband of the daughter of Manfred, the illegitimate son of the Emperor Frederic: so slight was the thread of his connexion with the illustrious house of Hohenstaufen, by virtue of which he succeeded to their Sicilian inheritance. He was 'called to the throne,' be it noted, by the voice of the people, not as others before him, either by right of conquest or by Papal donation. He reigned but three years in Sicily, viz. 1282-1285, dying in the latter year, a few months later than his rival, Charles of Anjou. We have seen already how Dante represents them after their lifelong strife singing in harmony together their song of penitence in *Purg.* vii. It only remains to add that Dante speaks of Peter in terms of high praise as one who

'D' ogni valor portò cinta la corda'.¹ (l. 114.)

Charles of Anjou will be the *pianta* and Charles the Lame its *seme*, instead of *vice versa*. (2) The rather gratuitous back-handed cut at S. Louis is noteworthy, especially as he was a martyr to that crusading energy which Dante held in high regard. But we must remember that he was in part at least responsible for the infliction upon Italy of his brother Charles of Anjou (see *supra*, p. 289). Also Dante had no great respect for imbecile saintliness, especially when its 'fruits' were so pernicious. Note his well-deserved sneer at the (inappropriately) so-called 'Good King Wenceslaus' a little before (l. 101). Again, in *Par.* viii. 147, he says that in the 'perverted currents of this world' some who are only fit for sermonizing are made kings. This may possibly refer to S. Louis, or else to the King Robert who was mentioned *supra*, p. 293, or even to both. Since I have mentioned incidentally 'the Good King Wenceslaus' (as we are familiar with him), otherwise also known as 'Wenceslaus the Pious,' I may add that Dante seems to have formed a juster estimate of his character, when he describes him as one '*cui lussuria ed ozio pasce*': for it is said that although, besides much strictness in other religious exercises, he attended two or three masses daily, yet he had an unusually (even for those times) large family of illegitimate children at the early age of twenty-five.

¹ 'Wore girt upon him the cord of every virtue;'

or, 'With every virtue bore his girdle braced' (CART).

He adds that if his son Alfonso, who sat there beside him, had survived (he having died at the early age of twenty in 1291), Peter would still have had a successor worthy of him, which could not be said in regard to his two other sons, James and Frederic, who were then (1300) reigning in Aragon and Sicily respectively. The title of 'Great' which was added to his name has been variously explained to refer to his mental qualities or to his bodily frame. The epithet 'membruto' given to him by Dante just above (l. 112) gives some colour to the latter interpretation.

Peter was succeeded on the throne of Aragon by Alfonso, and by Jacopo or James on that of Sicily. On the death of the former in 1291 (deplored, as we have seen, by Dante at *Purg.* vii. 115), James removed to Aragon, leaving his brother Frederic Viceroy of Sicily. His Spanish subjects honoured him with the title of 'the Just.' Dante, being concerned with his conduct in Sicily, has pronounced, with ample justice, a very different verdict. For in 1295, four years after his retirement from the island, wearied by perpetual conflict with the rival claimant for the throne, Charles the Lame (who was strongly supported first by Nicholas IV and afterwards by Boniface VIII), James was guilty of a 'gran rifiuto' by which he earned most deservedly the scorn and condemnation of the poet. In that year, owing to the machinations of Boniface VIII, it was arranged (1) that James should marry Blanche, daughter of Charles the Lame; (2) that he should release the three sons of Charles who (as we have seen) had been given up as hostages by their father to enable him to escape from his imprisonment at Cefalù seven years before, and had since been detained as prisoners in Spain (see *Par.* viii. 77); (3)—and this was the lowest depth of baseness—that he should resign in favour of Charles and the Angevins his claim to the kingdom of Sicily, thus sacrificing the rights of his own family, and those of his brother and Viceroy Frederic in particular, and also abandoning his subjects to the detested yoke from which they had lately succeeded in emancipating themselves. No wonder, then, that Dante—besides the general condemnation

of the degeneracy both of James and Frederic in *Purg.* vii. 119—should return to the charge in *Par.* xix. 136, and refer to the 'opere sozze,' 'the filthy works,' by which he and his uncle, James, king of Majorca (the two being here described as the brother and uncle of Frederic), had dishonoured two kingdoms. James, therefore, in 1285 resigned the crown of Sicily in virtue of this miserable compact, but he lived on in Spain till 1327.

His brother Frederic, however, refused, in spite of every inducement that Boniface could offer, such as the Senatorship of Rome, &c., to abandon his rights which were thus bartered away¹, and, supported by the people, not only succeeded his brother James as King of Sicily in 1296, but maintained himself on the throne for more than forty years. But it is very singular that he also terminated his strife with Charles, in 1302, by a base compact very similar to that which had been made by his brother James a few years before. He then married another daughter of Charles (Eleanor), but, instead of abandoning his kingdom, he agreed that *at his death* it should return to the Angevins, thus securing at any rate his own personal interests, and no doubt consoling himself (like Hezekiah) by the thought, 'Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?'

Charles seems to have been fortunate enough to possess an unfailing supply of marriageable daughters for any emergency, political or pecuniary. This is the third² occasion on which we have seen him—to use the bitter language of Dante—

'. . vender sua figlia e patteggiarne,
Come fanno i corsar dell' altre schiave.' (*Purg.* xx. 80, 81.)

He found it also useful to have a large family of sons, since (as we have already seen) he relieved himself from captivity by the vicarious imprisonment of three of them as his hostages for seven years. He may have had his own 'private interpretation' of the declaration of the Psalmist, 'Happy is the man

¹ See note *supra*, p. 287.

² See *supra*, pp. 292, 297. Beatrice, Blanche, and Eleanor are at any rate thus accounted for.

that hath his quiver full of them : they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate.'

The promised transfer of the kingdom, however, never took place, for not only did Frederic himself survive Charles by twenty-eight years, but his children for many generations sat upon the throne of Sicily.

A difficulty has been sometimes raised as to the alleged inconsistency of Dante's language and expressed opinions regarding Frederic. But the *fact* of this inconsistency is not perhaps established beyond doubt, and, even if it were so, it would be sufficiently explained by the tortuous and varying policy of the king. He is censured in general terms, as we have seen, in *Purg.* vii. 118 *seqq.*, *Conv.* IV. vi. 182, and *De Vulg. Elog.* I. xii. 36. But beside these passages there is that singular outburst of contemptuous vituperation in *Par.* xix. 130-135, where Dante denounces the 'avarizia e viltate' of Frederic, adding—

'Ed a dare ad intender quanto è poco,
La sua scrittura fien *lettere mosse*,
Che noteranno molto in parvo loco':

i. e. 'to show how paltry he is, his record shall be in maimed or mutilated letters (i. e. with the words contracted or abbreviated) which shall note down much in a brief space.' His misdeeds would demand a long record, but he is not worth wasting time or materials upon, and so the contemptible record shall be made in the most contemptuous manner.

A supposed inconsistency with this is found (1) in the expression

'Onor di Sicilia e d' Aragona'

applied to him and his brother James in *Purg.* iii. 116. But no importance need be attached to this, as the language may be official rather than personal, and moreover in any case it occurs in the mouth of their grandfather Manfred¹. (2) In the letter of Fra Ilario, who represents Dante as having had at one time the intention of dedicating the *Paradiso* to King Frederic II. I do not wish to enter on the question of the genuineness of that extremely interesting letter, which,

¹ See *supra*, p. 293, for a similar case.

as is well known, has been much disputed, and is now generally rejected; but, in any case, the altered attitude of Dante towards Frederic would be fully accounted for by the alteration in the king's conduct and policy. (We may note the same change in Dante's language at different times respecting even Clement V¹, and for the same reason.) There was a time when Dante had the highest hopes of Frederic. Not only did he join the Imperial party and support Dante's hero, the Emperor Henry VII, but after that emperor's death the chief hopes of the Imperialists were for a short time turned towards Frederic. He was offered the Signory of Pisa, and even came to that city to assume the leadership of the Ghibelline cause, but when he saw its apparent hopelessness, he basely, or, as some might say, prudently, abandoned it. Having thus made

‘per viltate un gran rifiuto,’

we need not wonder at the supreme contempt and disgust with which Dante speaks of him: feelings no doubt intensified by the recollection of what he had once hoped from him. He retired to his kingdom of Sicily, which he administered with capacity and success, ending his long reign of forty-one years in 1337². As he thus survived Dante by sixteen years, he had ample opportunity of studying the poet's estimate of his character in the pages of the *Paradiso*, by which he has indeed been immortalized, even though (to borrow Dante's language respecting Florence)

‘in grande onranza non ne sali.’ (*Inf.* xxvi. 6.)

This, then, closes the page of Sicilian history for our present purpose. We have endeavoured to thread our way

¹ I refer to *Epist.* v. § x. *ad fin.*: ‘Hic est quem Petrus, Dei vicarius, honorificare nos monet; quem Clemens, nunc Petri successor, luce Apostolicae benedictionis illuminat.’ The ‘benediction’ to which Dante here refers was conveyed in language of scarcely less exaggerated enthusiasm than that of Dante himself in this Epistle. See extracts from the Papal Circular (1310) given by Gregorovius *op. cit.* vol. vi. p. 28 n. Excommunication, however, very soon took the place of benediction.

² His epitaph at Catania is very laudatory, ending thus:

‘Sicanii populi maerent. Caelestia gaudent

Numina. Terra gemit. Rex Federicus obit.’

(Scartazzini, note on *Purg.* vii. 119.)

through its leading events in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with Dante in hand, and to view its principal actors at that period as they are depicted for us in his immortal pages. Let us take leave of the subject by a parting visit to that wonderful spot in the Cathedral of Palermo—the obscure and unpretending chapel in the south-west corner of the building, which contains within its narrow limits more remains of the illustrious dead than are now at any rate to be found in the same space anywhere else in the world besides—a spot more deeply interesting than even the far-famed vaults of the Escorial; more so, I venture to think, than the church at Innsbruck (as to which Mr. Symonds hesitates), with its justly celebrated and artistically far-superior group of heroes round the tomb of Maximilian, since some of these are mythical, like King Arthur, and most of them are buried elsewhere. That little chapel at Palermo contains crowded within its narrow limits (to pass over others of royal state and lineage, though of less note) the remains of the great Roger, first King of Sicily, the first, as king at any rate, of the line of Hauteville; those of the Emperor Henry VI, the founder of the line of Hohenstaufen in Sicily; chiefest perhaps of all, those of the Emperor Frederic II, ‘stupor mundi’; those also of his mother and his first wife, both named Constance—Constance of Hauteville and Constance of Aragon, the former being the daughter, the wife, and the mother respectively of the three great monarchs from whom ‘in death she is not divided.’ As we stand before the massive sarcophagus of Frederic, which reminds us even in its form of those ponderous sepulchres of the heretics imagined by Dante, we feel with something like awe how the very words of the poet in that Canto might, with literal truth, be inscribed upon it:—

‘Qua dentro è lo secondo Federico’¹.

¹ The original inscription, now displaced, on the tomb of Frederic was composed by his son Manfred, and was as follows:—

‘Si probitas, sensus, virtutum gratia, census,
Nobilitas orti possent resistere morti,
Non foret extinctus Fredericus, qui iacet intus.’

(From Mrs. Ross, *Land of Manfred*, p. 94.)

But we cannot better recall the poetry and the solemnity of this memorable spot than by concluding in the eloquent language of Mr. Symonds :

‘There, in a side chapel near the western door, stand the porphyry sarcophagi which shrine the bones of the Hautevilles and their representatives. There sleeps Roger—“*Dux strenuus et primus Rex Siciliae*”—with his daughter Constance in her purple chest beside him. Henry VI and Frederic II and Constance of Aragon complete the group. . . . Very sombre and stately are these porphyry resting-places of princes born in the purple, assembled here from lands so distant—from the craggy heights of Hohenstaufen, from the green orchards of Cotentin, from the dry hills of Aragon. They sleep and the centuries pass by. Rude hands break open the granite lids of their sepulchres to find tresses of yellow hair and fragments of imperial mantles embroidered with the hawks and stags the royal hunter loved. The church in which they lie changes with the change of taste in architecture, and the manners of successive ages. But the huge stone arks remain unmoved, guarding their freight of mouldering dust beneath gloomy canopies of stone that temper the sunlight as it streams from the chapel windows.’

Re: See *infra*.

Rogers



William

William

(P

4) [Bianca Lancia]

2) Manfred (illeg. d. 1266)

Sed Peter III :
stanza' (d. 1302)
ii. 143)

Peter III
(d. 1285)

**James
K. of Balearic Islands**

James II
K. of Sicily 1285
K. of Aragon 1291
signed Sicily 1295
(d. 1327)

Frederic II
Viceroy of Sicily 1291-5
K. of Sicily 1296-1337
(d. 1337)

**Iolanthe
m. Robert
son of Charles II
(in 1297)**

Charles of Anjou (Charles I)
 'el maschio naso.' (*Purg.* vii. 113)
 Nasuto 'l. 124 (1220-1285)

Charles the Lame (Charles II)
 Carlo novello.' (*Par.* vi. 106)
 di Gerusalemme.' (*Par.* xix. 127)
 (d. 1309)

' Il mal d' ^{Fort} ~~de~~ . 76)

Margaret
m. Charles
of Valois

Beatrice
m. Azzo VIII
of Este

Blanche
m.
K. James

Eleanor
m.
Frederic II

(7 others)

VII. THE GENUINENESS OF THE *QUAESTIO DE AQUA ET TERRA*

'Io, che al volto di tanti avversari parlo in questo Trattato, non posso brevemente parlare. Onde se le mie digressioni sono lunghe, nullo si maravigli.'

(*Conv.* IV. viii. 93-96.)

IT has for some time been the fashion, especially among Italian writers, to consider the spuriousness of the *Quaestio de Aqua et Terra* as a foregone conclusion, and one quite beyond the pale of serious discussion. When preparing the text of the Oxford Dante, I fell in at first, without further consideration, with the prevailing opinion (as still appears in the language of the Prefatory Note), so much so that I even had some hesitation as to the propriety of reprinting the Treatise at all among the works of Dante. But in the course of revising the proof-sheets of it for the press, I was struck with the sense of a ring of genuineness about it, and of the thoroughly Dantesque character, not only of the arguments themselves, but of their form and the details of the language in which they were expressed. This impression has been so much strengthened by further examination, that I desire now to invite the attention of Dante scholars to a reconsideration of the question.

I found that simultaneously and independently Dr. C. L. Shadwell, Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, who is well known as a distinguished and accomplished student of Dante, had been led to a similar conclusion respecting this work.

The results of his investigation were embodied in an important Paper read before the Oxford Dante Society in June, 1895. I am largely indebted to that Essay, and also to much further help and advice from Dr. Shadwell himself. In particular, the conjectural emendations inserted in the reprint of the Oxford Dante are almost entirely due to his suggestion. I certainly should not have ventured to publish anything on this subject without being assured that he was not willing to do so himself. I regret this decision very much, since Dr. Shadwell, besides having been the first to champion this supposed 'lost cause,' would have dealt with the subject in a far more scholarly way than I can hope to do myself.

This now little-read Treatise purports to be a discourse delivered by Dante on Jan. 20, 1320, to the assembled clergy of Verona, with the exception of a few whose absence is very sarcastically commented upon in the colophon. It was designed to determine finally a question which Dante had heard raised, and very unsatisfactorily dealt with, when he was at Mantua.

The 'Question' is briefly this, as it is explained in § 2. Can Water in its own sphere, or natural circumference, be in any place higher than the dry land or habitable part of the Earth? This arises out of the commonly accepted mediaeval belief that the 'spheres' of the four Elements lay concentrically 'above' or 'outside' one another, in the order, Earth, Water, Air, Fire (see first series of these *Studies*, pp. 122, 124, 300). and that consequently the 'loco proprio' of the Element Water (see *Conv.* III. iii) was above that of the Element Earth. The object of the Treatise is to prove that the above question should be answered in the negative¹.

The solution adopted is as follows. It is true that the Element Water in its proper sphere is above the Element Earth, and so it is in actual fact over fully three-fourths of the surface of the globe. But it is not in any place above the level of the 'terra detecta' or 'emergens,' which according to

¹ That this question was in Dante's time quite an open one will be seen below, pp. 367 *seqq.*

then current belief constituted about one-fourth of the surface of the globe, being commonly described as 'quarta habitabilis.' This occupies, however, an exceptional position in regard to the regular 'sphere' or 'natural circumference' of the Element Earth¹. It is a gibbous excrescence upon that spherical surface (§ 19, l. 20), and, roughly speaking, in the shape of a half-moon (*ib.* l. 62); 'et secundum haec salvatur concentricitas terrae et aquae' (*ib.* l. 7). The *final* and *efficient* causes (§ 9, l. 9) of this exceptional protuberance are very distinctly laid down. The *final* cause is that there may be some place where all the Elements (*miscibilia*) can meet and be combined in every possible form of corporeal existence (*corpora mixta et complexionata*), because if any potential form of existence remained undeveloped 'in act' it would imply a defect in the works of the 'motor caeli' (§ 18, l. 40). Such a meeting-point for all the Elements is therefore a necessity, and this could not exist 'nisi terra in aliqua parte emergeret, ut patet intuenti' (ll. 50-54). Next, as to the *efficient* cause. By what means did the 'Auctor Naturae' bring about this result? In § 19 the position, form and extent of the 'terra emergens' being precisely laid down, its elevation is attributed to the influence of the stars existing in the corresponding tract of the heavens (or of the Eighth Heaven) in respect of latitude and longitude, that particular collocation of stars having been itself pre-determined by the Creator in order to bring about this result upon the earth for the use of man (§ 21, ll. 62-72).

I may note that we do not see here much evidence of that marvellous anticipation of modern scientific ideas which have been thought so fatal to the claim of this Treatise to be the work of Dante. Though the tide of opinion in recent years has set very strongly against the genuineness of this work, as I have already noted, it must not be supposed that it has always been so. Among its defenders will be found the names of Torri, Fraticelli, Giuliani, Stoppani, Boehmer²,

¹ See § xxiii. ll. 18-23.

² Boehmer has proposed a series of critical emendations in the text in the *Jahrbuch der Dante-Gesellschaft*?, i. p. 395.

Schmidt¹. On the other hand, it has been unhesitatingly, and in some cases contemptuously, rejected by Tiraboschi, Arrivabene, Foscolo, Troya, Scartazzini, Bartoli, Renier², &c. Scartazzini, confident and dogmatic as usual, declares: 'Per ammettere che la *Quaestio* sia un lavoro di Dante, bisognerebbe ammettere un miracolo³.'

Now, first of all it must be frankly admitted that the almost complete absence of external evidence is a strong *prima facie* difficulty, and the circumstances under which the work made its appearance are not calculated to diminish that difficulty. It was first published, and, indeed, first heard of, in 1508, nearly 200 years after the death of Dante. It was then printed by one Giovanni Benedetto Moncetti da Castiglione Aretino⁴ from a MS. which he declared that he had recently discovered, but which, I believe, there is no evidence of any one else ever having seen. Neither has any other MS. of this work ever been heard of, nor is the work itself once mentioned by earlier writers. Under these remarkable and highly suspicious circumstances, it would probably be out of the question to maintain with any certainty the genuineness of the Treatise. But they are not such as to make this *impossible*, and it is therefore legitimate to interrogate the internal evidence afforded by the work itself. The result of this again might be to make the supposition of its genuineness impossible; and this indeed has been actually maintained on grounds which we shall presently examine. But, on the other hand, the result may also be to make its genuineness possible, or even probable, and perhaps in a very high degree probable, in spite of the defects of other evidence. Arguments, however, based entirely on such internal conditions, appeal with such very different force to different minds that no general

¹ *Über Dante's Stellung in der Geschichte der Kosmographie*, Graz, 1876.

² These statements are in some cases made on the authority of the Monograph by Luzio and Renier in the *Giornale Storico* which is referred to later.

³ *Prolegomeni*, p. 415.

⁴ This is now, I believe, called 'Castiglione Fiorentino.' I find it so registered in the official *Indice dei Comuni, &c.*, where there are no less than twenty-five places of the name of Castiglione, which have to be thus distinguished by different affixes.

agreement on the subject can be expected. The most one can hope to do is to show that the controversy is not finally closed, that judgement is not to be allowed to go by default, and that those who decline to summarily reject the Treatise are not to be regarded as entirely out of court by modern scholars. Such has been the line taken by some Italian critics in reference to the inclusion of the work in the Oxford Dante; and still more strongly in respect to the opinion more than once expressed by myself in my former volume of *Studies in Dante* that the genuineness of this work is certainly not to be considered as out of the question.

I. THE EXTERNAL EVIDENCE.

As we have already admitted that the external evidence for this work is of the slenderest possible description and highly suspicious, our main object now must be to show that it is merely negative and not necessarily adverse; so that the ground is at least left clear for the consideration of any indications of genuineness (if such there be) as may be detected in the work itself.

The adverse case, so far as it depends on external evidence, or its absence, may be summarized thus:—

1. No early writer makes any reference to any such work of Dante.
2. No other MS. of the work has ever been found or heard of.
3. It was nearly 200 years after the death of Dante before this alleged MS. was brought to light.
4. The very existence of the MS. rests on the sole and unsupported statement of its professed discoverer and assumed forger, Moncetti: and this is seriously discredited by the further fact that—
5. The MS. does not appear to have been seen by any one else, and since the publication of the Treatise it has entirely disappeared¹.

¹ 1, 2, 3, considered pp. 308-9; 4, pp. 309-14; 5, pp. 314-17.

1, 2, 3. The first three points may be considered together. It is true that no ancient biographer or commentator mentions or alludes to this work. But, assuming the account given on the face of it to be true, the discussion was held only about eighteen months before Dante's death, and there is no reason to suppose that it was ever put forth or published by him (whatever publication may have meant in those days). Probably, like a Paper read before a Society, or the MS. of a Lecture, the document was afterwards thrown aside and forgotten or mislaid, until (according to the account given) it was accidentally unearthed two centuries later. Such things have often happened in other cases, and in respect of works of much greater importance and general interest than this. It must be remembered also that the subject was highly technical, and one that would appeal to a very limited and special class of readers or hearers. We need not be surprised if the learned author was not 'requested to publish his interesting discourse,' or if no one took the trouble to copy it (even if any one had the chance), or if it never came to the knowledge of any early writer about Dante, none of their works (be it noted) falling within forty years or so of his death. How easily within a much shorter time than this might a pamphlet or lecture of this kind (even if published) be lost and forgotten¹! Let us not forget that no trace of Dante's handwriting remains even in the case of his most celebrated works, though there is internal evidence that parts of the *Commedia* itself were not written till 1319 or even 1320, i.e. less than two years before his death². It hardly

¹ Professors Luzio and Renier at the outset lay stress on the fact that no public record remains of this remarkable discussion at Verona, and that none of the ecclesiastics present seem to have made an effort to obtain a copy of the Paper. Surely there was never a weaker appeal to the *argumentum e silentio* than this! Was there the least likelihood of a passing incident of this kind (not an uncommon or remarkable one in those times) finding a place in any public record or chronicle? We know that sometimes even events of high public interest and importance have very unaccountably escaped notice in local archives. Thus I have seen it stated somewhere that the Archives of Barcelona are silent as to the triumphal entry of Columbus, and those of Portugal as to the voyages of Americo Vespucci.

Indeed, if we accept the statement of Boccaccio (*Vita*, § 14), the last thirteen Cantos of the *Paradiso* were missing for more than eight months after Dante's

needs to be added that, if this should be the true history of the fate of Dante's MS. of his Lecture, the length of time that elapsed before its discovery in no way prejudices its claims, nor is it likely that any other copy of the work has ever existed. It is also perhaps worth noticing that the interest in the works of Dante was for about 200 years almost entirely limited to the *Commedia*. Of his other works, only the *Convito* had been published when this Treatise was given to the world. It preceded the *De Vulg. Eloq.* (1529) by twenty-one years; the *De Mon.* (1559, at Basle!) by fifty-one; and, most surprising of all, the *Vita Nuova* (1576) by nearly seventy years! It was itself indeed *reprinted* in the same year that the first edition of the *Vita Nuova* saw the light.

4. So much for the first three points, which really do not present any serious difficulty. The fourth is much more important. We naturally ask with much interest, What is known of the personal or literary character of the man who makes this vitally important statement of fact, and who, if the statement be false, must almost certainly be accepted as himself the author or forger of the work?

This point has been dealt with very fully and elaborately in a composite article by Alessandro Luzio and Rodolfo Renier in vol. xx of the *Giornale Storico*, pp. 125-150, the arguments of which we will now examine at some length.

(i) The general purpose of this Article is to show that Moncetti was a thoroughly untrustworthy, vain, and contemptible person, in his extant letters exhibiting a tasteless and pompous style, self-advertising and parasitical to an extreme degree. But it is added that he had considerable reputation as a mathematician and astrologer, claiming even some powers of prophecy. The writers describe him as 'tutto imbevuto di scienza medievale.' Further he was considered as a fairly capable man of affairs, being Vicar-

death. Boccaccio names as his authority for this story an intimate friend of Dante and his family, who is proved by independent documentary evidence to have been at Ravenna in 1320 and onwards. (See *Dante and his Early Biographers*, p. 52; and Guerrini e Ricci, *Studi, &c.*, pp. 23, 24, 38, &c.)

General of the Augustinian Order in Germany and having been entrusted with missions in France, Germany, and even England, where he is said to have received some mark of distinction from Henry VIII. The inference drawn from all this is that Moncetti had at least '*la capacità a delinquere*.'

So much may perhaps be admitted without injurious consequences. But we may observe on what has been said so far—(1) that many of the personal characteristics mentioned have no bearing on the present question at all. (2) That Moncetti's mathematical and kindred studies might no doubt *enable* him to effect such a forgery, but they would also place him in special danger of betraying himself by anachronistic knowledge, which (as will be seen) I claim to have proved is nowhere to be found. (3) It may certainly be admitted that they might tempt him to go beyond the legitimate functions of an editor, as indeed his own admissions also would lead us to suspect. (4) If his own style was pompous and inflated, nothing could differ more widely from that of the *Quaestio*. The fragments of his writings which are quoted by the authors of this Article are as unlike this as possible. (5) The distinguished authors of this Article can hardly find words strong enough to express their contempt for Moncetti. He is branded as '*scroccone e cerretano*'; he was not '*fior di farina*,' &c., &c.¹ This is surely nothing but an elaborate and laborious *Ignoratio Elenchi*. Besides, the writers do not seem to observe that the more contemptible they make him the less capable does he appear of accomplishing such a forgery as this, one which we confidently maintain, if it be a forgery at all, to be one of extraordinary and exceptional skill.

(ii) In the next place, considerable stress is laid upon Moncetti's having similarly *edited for the first time* a treatise of Cardinal Egidio Colonna (who lived two centuries earlier, and was therefore contemporary with Dante), viz. *Tractatus de formatione humani corporis in utero*, which he dedicated to Henry VIII of England. It is argued that in this also

¹ pp. 143, 147.

similar motives of self-advertisement are displayed¹ as in the case before us, and Moncetti describes this work likewise as 'correctus, revisus, renovatus et auctus.' But the astonishing point about this argument is that the treatise thus attributed to Egidio Colonna is admitted by the authors of the Article to be *undoubtedly genuine*! The mere fact that vanity, bad taste, editorial licence, are exhibited in the treatment of it, as perhaps in that of the *Quaestio*, is nothing more than was to be naturally expected.

This argument therefore is not only irrelevant, but surely recoils upon its authors.

(iii) It is suggested that the initial or preliminary scene of the discussion embodied in the *Quaestio* is placed at Mantua in order to flatter Gonzaga, one of Moncetti's patrons. The authors are conscious of the obvious retort, Why then is the actual scene of the disputation itself laid at Verona, and not also at Mantua? To which they can only offer the feeble reply that we cannot say without knowing more in detail about the life of Moncetti (p. 150).

(iv) It is noted as suspicious that in a consolatory letter to the Queen of France upon the death of Louis XII, Moncetti describes himself as 'inter sanctae Theologiae doctores minimus,' since at the beginning of the *Quaestio* Dante is represented as describing himself in similar terms as 'inter vere philosophantes minimus.' But this letter of Moncetti was written in 1515, whereas the *Quaestio* was published in 1508. Why then might he not perfectly well have borrowed the phrase from it and applied it to himself? Besides, the expression attributed here to Dante at any rate closely resembles his language in *Epist.* viii. § 5, 'Quippe de ovibus pascuis Jesu Christi minima una sum.' Compare also *Conv.* I. i. ll. 67 *seqq.* and IV. xxx. ll. 15-23².

Again, (v) no evidence is produced by the writers, nor does it appear that any such exists, that Moncetti was a special student of Dante, or even that he ever gave any other sign

¹ 'L'intento del Moncetti nel pubblicarlo non sembra del tutto diverso da quello,' &c. (p. 149).

² See further *infra*, p. 328.

of taking any interest whatever in his works. It seems quite certain that no one but a very minute and careful student could possibly have executed such a forgery as this, or could have avoided exposing himself to palpable detection at every turn. Is it likely that such a student should be content to palm this forgery on the world, as the *only* fruit of that 'lungo studio e grande amore' which enabled him to produce it?

(vi) Several important arguments (as it seems to me) may be derived from a consideration of the particular *author* and the special *subject* chosen for the alleged forgery.

(a) Why (as was, I believe, suggested by Dr. Shadwell) should Moncetti, or any other forger at that time, select Dante for the purpose—an author in whose works, as we have seen (*supra*, p. 309), singularly little interest was then felt? Would he not rather have chosen some classical author, the alleged recovery of some of whose works would have much more effectually advertised the fortunate discoverer?

(b) But we may ask further, even supposing him to have selected Dante for his purpose, why should he choose a subject so widely different from any treated of in the acknowledged works of Dante, and one in which there is no evidence of his having felt any special interest? There were several topics much more promising ready to hand, and almost inviting the attention of a forger, such as those announced by Dante himself for future treatment in some of the unfinished *Trattati* of the *Convito*, or in the two remaining Books of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*.

(c) Then, again, the question here discussed so elaborately and sometimes with such warmth was entirely obsolete and dead in the sixteenth century, having not even so much as an 'academic' interest. On the other hand in the time of Dante it was very much 'alive.' There is, it is true, no other evidence in the admitted works of Dante to show this, as a sign-post to an intending forger. But there is plenty of other evidence of the interest then felt in the question, and moreover that the view here advocated was not apparently that which was generally accepted. This appears to me to

be such an important point as bearing on the likelihood of Dante's having undertaken the serious discussion of a question outside his usual range that I have collected a good deal of evidence in proof of it. This is inserted in the Appendix (pp. 358 *seqq.*) to avoid the insertion of too long a digression here.

(*d*) It is pertinent to ask, if Moncetti were a man of such inordinate vanity, and at the same time so deeply imbued with the scientific knowledge of his age, as is alleged (see *supra*, p. 309), is it likely that he would have lost the opportunity of displaying his erudition by annotations correcting the crude conceptions and the obsolete physical theories with which the work abounds, and which (on this hypothesis) he must have himself consciously introduced? In whatever way we look at it, there is an extraordinary absence of motive in such an aimless forgery as this would have been. The Treatise, in fact, seems to have attracted as little attention as might in that age have been anticipated.

(*e*) But there is another peculiarity in the blunders found in this Treatise, besides their scientific inaccuracy, which is extremely difficult to account for on this hypothesis of forgery¹. The arrangement of the arguments in §§ 14 *seqq.*, especially as indicated by the headings of those sections, is in considerable confusion. In some sections (notably § 18) the punctuation and divisions of the sentences are so blundering that the argument and even the sense is lost. Again, there are many single words, which are obviously false readings, such as occasionally produce sheer nonsense, and sometimes even the very reverse of the point intended, e. g. :—

§ 10, l. 7. excentrica instead of concentrica.

§ 12, l. 53. fluitatis „ „ gravitatis.

§ 20, l. 54. alterius „ „ ulterius, &c.

Now all such errors might easily arise from misunderstanding, or misreading, or the unintelligent editing, of a MS. written by some one else 200 years before, but *how could they*

¹ I owe this argument again, in the main, to Dr. Shadwell, who has also suggested the emendations given above, and others which may be seen in the list inserted in the Oxford Dante, opposite p. 423.

possibly find place in the autograph of a forger? The suggestion (as Dr. Shadwell points out) that such blunders as these should have been purposely introduced 'as a trap to mislead critics' is too absurd to need serious refutation.

5. It now remains to consider the last of the five points on p. 307, viz., the extremely suspicious circumstance (as it is alleged) of the sudden disappearance of the original MS. It will be seen that this is not nearly so serious or exceptional an occurrence as might at first sight appear.

(i) There are not only many other cases (generally familiar) in which important works of the ancient world have survived in a single MS., but there are also several in which those MSS., after their publication in print, have mysteriously and entirely disappeared, and no longer seem to exist. I will mention one or two of them which I happen to have heard of. Others might no doubt be added. Professor Ramsay states¹ that 'the correspondence of Pliny with Trajan depends on a single MS. found in Paris c. 1500 A.D., and seen by several persons before 1508, after which it has wholly disappeared.' The same is the case with some of the works of Cicero. Mr. A. C. Clark, Fellow and Tutor of Queen's College, Oxford, informs me that the second book of the Letters to Brutus was first published by Cratander (Basle, 1528), but that no MS. of them is known to exist. Some editors have supposed them to be a forgery, possibly a very ancient, and perhaps nearly contemporary, forgery, though recent critics generally hold them to be genuine. But in any case, no one doubts that Cratander had a MS. from which he printed, and that he at any rate did not forge the Letters, even though, since their publication, no MS. has been seen. Mr. Clark has also kindly drawn my attention to the history of Cicero's Letters to Atticus. They were discovered by Petrarch at Verona, but the MS. which he found is lost. Another MS. was found and used by Cratander, but that too is lost. A third MS. was lent to Lambinus by a Lyons printer named de Tournes, but that also has disappeared. It is true that certain copies of these MSS. were made and still survive, but the fate of all the

¹ *The Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 196.

original MSS. shows how the disappearance of MSS., after being copied or printed from, was not at all an uncommon occurrence. Again, a large number of the original MSS. found by Poggio have been lost. These include the MSS. of several of the Speeches of Cicero, whose genuineness no one doubts; as well as those of Asconius, Valerius Flaccus, Manilius, Silius Italicus, and the *Silvae* of Statius. Professor Robinson Ellis informs me that the Satire ascribed to Sulpicia (about seventy hexameter lines) rests entirely on one MS. which has long ago disappeared. There is now no evidence or authority for this work whatever, except the early editions of Merula (1498 and 1509) and Ugoletus (1499 and 1510). Finally, Velleius Paterculus rests also on a single MS., which has been lost since early in the sixteenth century, though a copy made by Amerbach in 1516 still exists, the *editio princeps* being in 1520. The MS. itself was only discovered in 1515¹.

It is true that in most, if not all, of these cases, some others saw the MSS. before they were lost or destroyed. But when such widespread carelessness and indifference as to the preservation of original MSS. was prevalent, we cannot lay very great stress upon this, or regard it as much more than accidental. Strange as Moncetti's action may seem to us, and damaging to his own credit, yet it cannot be pronounced incredible, for there is scarcely any limit to the vagaries of individual caprice or carelessness, and we have very frequent

¹ Mr. Toynbee draws my attention to the case of the important and undoubtedly genuine Old French poem known as 'Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem,' preserved in one MS. only, at one time in the British Museum, but now lost. He has also kindly pointed out to me a passage in Dr. Voigt's *Pétrarque, Boccace, et les Débuts de l'Humanisme en Italie*, from which I gather the following further details as to the frequent loss of valuable MSS. Several MSS. of parts of Cicero found by Poggio at St. Gall, Langres, &c. have totally disappeared. Another discovered about the same time, 1422 (though not by Poggio), at Lodi, shared the same fate. In all these cases copies were happily made which have survived, and on these alone (in several cases) our knowledge of the original works depends. Voigt concludes thus:—'Si l'on jette un regard sur le nombre des vieux manuscrits, qui furent, pendant ces dix années, remis au jour, pour périr ensuite et disparaître sans retour, et qui constituent la plupart du temps les derniers restes d'un monument littéraire, on pourra se faire une idée des services éminents rendus par ceux qui les ont découverts et sauvés' (p. 241).

experience of strangeness in the actions of apparently sensible people, which seems to border upon infatuation or even lunacy. Indeed, I have seen it somewhere paradoxically stated, that the laws of probability, though they are expected to be observed in fiction, do not seem to have any force in actual life.

(ii) But there is a point of view from which such an action is far from being as strange as it would appear to us if it occurred now. The attaching of interest and importance to autographs and original documents is comparatively modern. Witness the very early and total disappearance of the autographs of every one of Dante's works (already noticed), so that commentators within about twelve years of his death are found dubiously discussing important differences of reading¹! Again, in the correspondence of scholars, cases occur of a MS. when lent being copied fairly and neatly, and the *copy* being returned to the owner instead of the original, both parties being satisfied that the owner had made a good exchange, and had received 'χρῆσα χαλκείων.' In fact, a MS. once printed was treated as so much 'copy,' and as no longer worth preserving. There would therefore be nothing unusual three or four centuries ago in the loss or destruction of this MS. by Moncetti, or perhaps by his printers.

(iii) It might even be possible, though scarcely necessary, to suppose a sinister purpose in its destruction, without going so far as to raise any suspicion of forgery. Professors Luzio and Renier have laid much stress on the inordinate vanity of Moncetti. This might have prompted the notion of reserving to himself the unique privilege of setting eyes upon this treasure, and of enhancing the value of his own editorial work by making it the sole channel of transmission to posterity of the newly-discovered treatise. Book-collectors have been known to destroy a duplicate copy of a rare book or pamphlet in order to secure to themselves the acute pleasure of unique possession. Again, another possible, though perhaps less likely, motive might be suggested. Moncetti may have taken considerable editorial liberties with the MS., and to a certain

¹ See *Textual Criticism*, pp. 382, 385.

extent he admits this in the title of his edition of 1508, since he describes the treatise as 'diligenter et accurate correcta' by himself. If it were not that he seems rather proud of it, we might think that he had good reasons for not wishing to afford the world the opportunity of testing or criticizing his editorial labours. But, at any rate, he might like to place them beyond the reach of criticism or revision, and thus make his edition a final and unalterable one.

On this point one remark may be added. We have at any rate, as a result of the disappearance of the MS., no means of judging how far it may have been tampered with, or possibly added to, in the way of interpolation. Therefore, if one or two traces should be found of anachronistic knowledge in it, which we maintain has not been shown to be the case, they might be accounted for on this supposition. But, even were we to admit such manipulation of the MS. to be far more extensive than we have any reason to suppose, this would not show that we had not in our hands a genuine work of Dante, though one possibly corrupted and deteriorated. In any case it is not likely to have been more recklessly tampered with than the text of some of the recognized works of Dante (such as the *Convito*) by some modern editors. Happily the survival of the MSS. in these cases enables us still to detect and undo their mischief.

II. THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

In dealing with the Internal Evidence, it will be best to consider first the *adverse*¹ arguments that have been based on alleged anachronisms in respect of scientific knowledge, for, if such anachronisms are truly to be found in the work, *cadit quaestio* (in more senses than one); the hand of the forger is detected at once. In that case no array of evidence based upon Dantesque peculiarities of language or thought can have any value or even interest, except as a measure of the skill with which the work of forgery has been executed.

¹ The alleged adverse or negative arguments are dealt with on pp. 318-327, those favourable or positive on pp. 327 *seqq.* under three heads suggested on p. 327.

Turning then to this point, we find at once a strange diversity of opinion as to the actual *data*. Some, after careful examination, can discover little or nothing beyond the physical theories already propounded (before Dante) by Brunetto Latini, Ristoro d'Arezzo, Joannes de Sacrobosco, &c. Others profess to find marvellous anticipations of Leonardo da Vinci and other pioneers of modern science, as though the mind of Dante

‘Alle sue visioni quasi è divina.’

Strange to say, the principal advocate of this view—Stoppani—is among the stout defenders of the genuineness of the Treatise, and not, as we should expect, among its assailants. But he is indeed a very compromising ally, and his ill-judged rhetoric has supplied the armoury from which opponents have drawn some of their most effective weapons. For, to say the truth, unless we are prepared, in the language of Scartazzini, ‘ammettere un miracolo,’ these ‘marvellous anticipations’ constitute in plain fact so many anachronisms, an admission of which would be fatal to the Dantesque authorship¹. These ‘wounds of a friend’ are indeed the most serious arguments which we have to meet. We may take two general objections to them before considering them in detail.

(1) Supposing these ‘anticipations’ to be clearly and distinctly expressed in the language of the Treatise, as imagined by Stoppani, how is it they are not advanced in any way as novelties by the writer, but rather appealed to as acknowledged facts or principles?

(2) Assuming (with Stoppani) the current statement as to the circumstances in which they were uttered, ‘coram universo clero Veronensi,’ would not such startling physical heresies (as they would *ex hypothesi* appear to be) have challenged attention and provoked opposition to such a degree that the subject could not, so to speak, have died a natural death—nor perhaps its author either—and been forthwith forgotten?

¹ It is strange how often blind admirers of Dante have credited him with the gift of prophecy, in the sense of clairvoyance of future events. See *supra*, p. 7.

But next, what are these marvellous 'anticipations,' or 'anachronisms,' when looked at in detail? Stoppani enumerates no fewer than nine, '*presagiti*, affermati, ed anche dimostrati, in codeste poche pagine¹,' constituting, if admitted, an almost fatal indictment against his own client.

(1) The Moon as the principal cause of the Tides; see § 7 *init.*, '*Aqua videtur maxime sequi motum Lunae, ut patet in accessu et recessu maris.*'

It may be doubted what precise degree of correct knowledge may be conveyed by these words. But in any case it does not necessarily go beyond what Dante may have read in S. Thomas, *Summa*, i. Q. 110, Art. 3, '*Sicut fluxus et refluxus maris non consequitur formam substantialem aquae, sed virtutem lunae*' (comp. i. Q. 105, Art. 6). Or again, ii. 2^{dae} Q. 2, Art. 3, '*Sicut aqua secundum motum proprium movetur ad centrum; secundum autem motum lunae movetur circa centrum secundum fluxum et refluxum.*'

Or again, in Albertus Magnus, *De proprietatibus elementorum*, Tract. II. c. iv, the tides are said to be due to the influence of all the planets, but especially to that of the Sun and Moon; because the Sun, as the source of heat, draws up moisture '*ad omnium corporum coelestium nutrimentum*,' while the Moon, '*quod proprietatis est aquae*,' affects the sea '*connaturaliter.*'

Once more, note the language of Dante himself in *Par.* xvi. 83:—

'E come il volger del ciel della luna
Copre e discopre i liti senza posa.'

The very expression '*sequi motum Lunae*' closely resembles '*il volger del ciel della luna*,' and is certainly not one which a writer would have chosen who correctly understood the cause of the Moon's action on the tides. I have quoted the language of Albertus Magnus *supra* to show how little one can judge of the scientific value of vague statements till one ascertains the grounds (often erroneous and quite valueless) upon which they are based.

¹ Giuliani, *Op. Lat. di Dante*, ii. pp. 451-462, where Stoppani's curious letter on this subject is printed.

Nay, even Lucan has some vague notion of the connexion between the Moon and the Tides, as is expressed in *Phars.* x. 204:—

‘Luna suis vicibus Tethyn terrenaque miscet’¹

See, further, several theories as to Tides (including the one occurring in the text) in Brunetto Latini, *Trésor* I, Part iv, c. 125 (p. 172).

It seems evident from many places that the idea at the back of the writer’s mind is the ‘influence’ of the stellar spheres, which is so prominent a thought in the physical and ethical systems of Dante (see *inf.* p. 341, on § 21). We may observe the strangely unscientific idea that water is ‘corpus *imitabile orbis* Lunae’ (§ xxiii. ll. 50 *seqq.*), so that it is felt to be a difficulty demanding explanation that the motion of water is one of elevation, while that of the Moon is circular. The explanation itself shows how little the writer knew of the action of the Moon on the Tides, when he argues that because water ‘imitates’ the Moon’s revolution in some respects it need not do so in all. It appears from § 7 that the opponents relied on the argument that owing to this ‘imitation’ the surface of water must be ‘excentric’ like the orbit of the Moon, and consequently would naturally be in some places higher than the ‘dry land.’ The writer, whoever he was, seems to accept the *principle* assumed, and merely to reject the *inference*. See further *infra*, p. 343.

(2) The second ‘anticipation’ is said to be the ‘uniformity of the sea level.’ This principle is assumed by the writer as something quite obvious and necessary, and as affording a ready and complete answer to the theory against which he was contending, viz. that the sea is above the level of the land. This implies either that it is *not concentric* with the

¹ Mr. Toynbee has kindly sent me the following note:—‘The influence of the moon upon the tides is discussed by Pliny (II. 97) in a passage which is quoted by Vincent of Beauvais in the *Speculum Naturale* (V. 18):—“*Aestus maris accedere et reciprocare mirum est, verum causa est in sole et luna. Bis inter duos exortus lunae affluunt bisque remeant vicenis quaternisque semper horis.*” The phenomenon was familiar, too, in later times to Macrobius (circ. 430) and Martianus Capella (circ. 470), both of whom are quoted in this connexion by Bartholomaeus Anglicus (circ. 1260) in his *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (viii. 29).’

land at the common centre of the earth, and therefore of the universe (according to the received cosmical theories of that time), or that it is *gibbous* in places (see § x). In refutation it is argued (1) 'quod aqua naturaliter movetur deorsum'; and (2) 'quod aqua est labile corpus naturaliter' (§ xi.)¹. These two facts are appealed to as 'principia'; and if any one denies both or either of them he is beyond the reach of argument (*ib.*). Surely there is nothing novel in the appeal to such rudimentary facts of experience as these. Nor can the case of the ocean by reason of its magnitude differ from that of the smallest pond. It is evident that to this the language of Aristotle in a similar case would apply: οὐδὲν τοίνυν τοῦτο διαφέρει λέγειν ἐπὶ βώλου καὶ μορίου τοῦ τυχόντος, ἢ ἐπὶ ὅλης τῆς γῆς· οὐ γὰρ διὰ μικρότητα ἢ μέγεθος εἴρηται τὸ συμβαῖνον, *De Coelo*, II. xiv (297, b. 7-9). Finally, we may compare again *Li Trésors*, I. part iii. c. 106 (p. 115): 'il est propre nature des aigues que eles montent tant comme eles avalent.'

(3) The next point noted, which is described as 'miracolo di fantasia,' is 'forza centripeta,' i. e. the force of gravity. The passage chiefly relied upon is quoted from § xvi. ll. 51 *seqq.*: 'Potissima virtus gravitatis est in corpore potissime petente centrum, quod quidem est terra: ergo ipsa potissime attingit finem gravitatis, qui est centrum mundi.' But this is certainly not intended in the Newtonian sense, though the word 'gravitas' occurs (as it does several times in the Treatise), but merely in that which is as old as Aristotle, viz. that, whereas all elements have their 'loco proprio' to which they tend, that of earth and other heavy bodies is the centre of the world and therefore of the universe². There is nothing in

¹ See further § xx. ll. 47-51.

² See passage quoted in *Studies in Dante*, i. p. 122, and Conv. III. iii. *passim*. Add *Inf.* xi. 64, 65: 'il punto dell' universo, in su che Dite siede'; and compare *Inf.* xxxii. 8: 'fondo a tutto l' universo.' Also in Brunetto Latini, *Trésor*, B. I. part iii. c. 105 (p. 113) we read: 'toutes choses se traient et vont tozjors au plus bas, et la plus basse chose e la plus parfonde qui soit au monde est li poins de la terre, ce est li mileu dedans, qui est apelez abismes, là où enfers est assis.' Just before, Brunetto has explained that a falling stone would come to rest at the centre of the earth and would proceed no further; and that even if it could be projected beyond that point it would return to it again. The same

the *Quaestio* in this respect beyond what is stated by Dante in *Conv.* III. iii¹, or in the still more familiar passages in *Inf.* xxxii. 73, 74:—

‘E mentre che andavamo in ver lo mezzo
Al quale ogni gravezza si raduna’;

and *Inf.* xxxiv. 110, 111:—

‘Il punto
Al qual si traggon d’ogni parte i pesi.’

See once more *De Mon.* I. xv. l. 38: ‘plures glebas diceremus concordēs, propter condiscendere omnes ad medium.’

But it is useless to multiply quotations on so obvious a point.

The utterly unscientific use of the misleading term ‘gravitas’ will appear at once from the explanation given of it in § xii.: “‘Grave’ et ‘leve’ sunt passionēs² corporum simplicium quae moventur motu recto³; et levia moventur sursum, gravia vero deorsum.’ Here we have merely the old-world notion of the distinctions of the Elements (‘corpora simplicia’); Earth and Water having ‘gravitas,’ and Air and Fire ‘levitas,’ as their properties (‘passiones’)⁴; and the words above quoted show that ‘gravitas’ does not belong to Air and Fire, so that there is no trace here of ‘Universal Gravitation’! See further

statement is made very clearly and forcibly by Benvenuto commenting on *Inf.* xxxiv. 80 (ii. p. 563). See also Vincent de Beauvais, *Speculum*, vi. 7.

¹ See especially ll. 8–11: ‘le corpora simplicia hanno amore naturato in sè al loro loco proprio, e però la terra sempre scende al centro.’

² Comp. § 18, ll. 5–7:—‘Corpora simplicia . . . regulariter in suis partibus qualificantur omni naturali passione.’

³ *Motu recto*, i. e. (as is expressly stated of the element of Fire in § xxiii. l. 58, in a straight line, either upwards or downwards. This is to distinguish the ‘four Elements’ from the ‘Quinta Essentia’ whose motion was declared to be circular, and whose very existence was assumed on the *a priori* ground that there *must* be an element exhibiting the most perfect (i. e. circular) form of motion. Compare Albertus Magnus, *De Nat. Loc.* Tr. I. c. 3 (V. p. 265): ‘Locus igitur ignis erit in concavo lunae super omnia corpora habentia motum rectum.’

⁴ The antiquated physical teaching found here is expounded by B. Latini, *Trésor*, B. I. part iii. c. 100 (p. 105): ‘ὕλη’ was created in six days, and out of this ὕλη arise four elements, two *light* and two *heavy*, though all four partake of these two qualities in different degrees at different times. See also *De Mon.* I. xv. 45: ‘qualitas una formaliter in glebis scilicet *gravitas*, et una in flammis, scilicet *levitas*.’ Such is the ‘gravitas’ of the *Quaestio*!

§ xvi. ll. 2-6, 51-55, and specially note the expression 'finem gravitatis, qui est centrum mundi,' which merely repeats the idea of the passages just quoted from *Inf.* xxxii. and xxxiv. Finally, see how 'gravitas' is used in § xviii. ll. 11 *seqq.*: 'cum gravitas insit naturaliter terrae, et terra sit corpus simplex,' &c. Was there ever a more flagrant 'Fallacia Equivocationis' than to argue that such passages as these, because they contain the precious term 'gravitas', imply a knowledge or anticipation of the Newtonian Theory? 'Sed rideret Newtonus si audiret,' to adapt the words of § xii. l. 36. It is an excellent illustration of the writer's own words in § xii. *fn.*: 'diversitas rationis cum identitate nominis equivocationem facit.'

(4) The rotundity or sphericity of the earth. But this idea is far older than Dante. To cite only one authority. It is maintained by Alfraganus, *Elem. Astron.* c. iii, by various arguments, the first words of the chapter being 'Haud secus inter sapientes convenit, terram una cum aqua globosam esse.' Further, it is as old as Aristotle. See *De Coelo*, II. xiv (297 b 24-30), where, among other arguments in support of it, the phenomenon of lunar eclipses is cited².

(5) It is difficult to see how the next point alleged, viz. that the mountains and continents are 'gibbosities' on the surface of the spherical globe, can be described as in any sense a

¹ Indeed one might equally well credit S. Thomas Aquinas with a similar 'anticipation' on the strength of his language in *Summa* i. 2^{ae} Q. 26, Art. 1, when he says that a 'natural appetite' in man moves towards its object, owing to 'connaturalitas appetentis ad id in quod tendit, quae dici potest amor naturalis: sicut ipsa connaturalitas corporis ad locum medium est per *gravitatem*; et potest dici amor naturalis,' &c.

² Moreover Brunetto Latini, *Trésor*, I. part iii, c. 105 (p. 111), and Ristoro d'Arezzo (B. II. c. 1, p. 35), give a number of *a priori* reasons why the world *could* not have had any other than a spherical form. Sacrobosco (B. I. 5 and 6) proves it by a variety of arguments, including that derived from the wider view from the mast of a ship than from its deck (see *Quaestio*, §§ v and xxiii.). This is illustrated by a diagram, which explains why, unless the surface of the water were spherical, the view from the deck would be better (cf. *Quaestio*, § xxiii. l. 31, '*magis enim viderent*') because the line of sight would be shorter. A similar argument and diagram are found in Roger Bacon, *Op. Maj.* part iv. c. 10 (i. p. 156): 'Relinquitur quod aliquid impedit visum illius qui est in navi. Sed nihil potest esse nisi tumor sphaericus aquae. Ergo est sphaericae figurae.' This language remarkably resembles that of *Quaestio*, § xxiii. ll. 32-38.

'presagio,' and therefore nothing more need be said about it. The passage in the *Quaestio* referred to is in § xix. ll. 20 *seqq.*

(6) The same is the case in regard to the statement that the 'dry land' is congregated within certain limits of latitude and longitude in the *Northern* hemisphere exclusively. This was the common belief of ancient and mediaeval geographers, and the very clear and instructive statements on this subject in § xix. are not only thoroughly Dantesque, but are little more than can be read in Alfraganus, *Elem. Astron.* c. vi, a work which, as I have noted in several other places, was undoubtedly familiar to Dante himself. For a recognition of this theory in Dante, as well as a very singular speculation concerning its cause, see *Inf.* xxxiv. 121-126, and *supra*, p. 246.

But in any case one does not quite see how this is even *true*, whether as 'anticipation' or not. Stoppani himself is not quite easy about it, since he apologizes for it thus: 'Se non è esatto l'asserirlo per tutti, è verissimo riguardo alla massima parte dei rilievi terrestri.' But the statements of the *Quaestio*, as well as those of Dante elsewhere, go far beyond this.

(7) The seventh point is *prima facie* of more importance. It is very misleadingly styled 'Universal attraction,' 'la mutua attrazione tra i grandi corpi dello spazio, compresa la terra' (p. 455). This no doubt would be a startling anticipation of the doctrine of universal gravitation, if it were actually found in the *Quaestio*, but there is certainly nothing of the sort. The highly significant word 'mutua' in the above quotation involves an idea of which there is absolutely no trace. And the only foundation for this surprising statement is a very crude suggestion of the author of the *Quaestio*, that the mountains and other 'gibbosities' on the earth's surface may possibly be due to 'virtus elevans illis stellis quae sunt in regione coeli istis duobus circulis contenta (i. e. between the Equator and Arctic Circle, and therefore lying over just that part of the globe where dry land 'stands out of the water') sive elevet per modum attractionis, ut magnes attrahit ferrum, sive per modum pulsionis, generando

vapores pellentes, ut in particularibus montuositatibus' (§ xxi.)¹. Who in his sober senses could possibly distort this tentative and evidently wholly erroneous hypothesis into the modern doctrine of the 'mutual attraction of all material bodies'?

(8) In the imposing statement which comes next, of the 'Elasticity of vapours as a motive power' (Giuliani, *op. cit.* p. 456), we have some difficulty in recognizing the tolerably obvious suggestion of the passage just quoted, that some 'montuositates' are generated by explosive volcanic forces! This, however, is not only obvious, but may be found in Aristotle's *Meteor.* (See *Studies*, Series I. pp. 128, 131, &c.)

(9) The 'elevation of the continents' is the last of these fantastical 'anticipations' of modern science, and is introduced as a sort of climax, 'vincente di lunga mano per importanza storica sugli altri' (*op. cit.* p. 456). It is advanced as an 'anticipation' in particular of the geological speculation of Leonardo da Vinci that the fossils found on the tops of mountains indicate that these were once at the bottom of the sea. The quotations already given are sufficient to show how entirely alien any such 'geological' ideas are from the mind of the writer of this Treatise².

It would be difficult to find a more extraordinary illustration of the common 'fallacy of observation,' that of 'confusing facts with inferences from those facts'³, or of

¹ This singular word 'montuositas' is only registered as occurring once by Ducange, viz. in Nicolaus de Jamsilla 'de Gestis Frederici Secundi' (that chronicler ending in year 1258). The words 'ex loci montuositate' occur in a description of the neighbourhood of the 'Civitas Castri Joannis,' which is said to be 'cunctis aliis Siciliae locis eminentior, solo Monte Gibello superexcellsa.' Mr. Paget Toynbee informs me that *montuositas* is registered in the *Catholicon* of Joannes de Janua (completed in 1286) under *montuus*. '*Montuus*, a mons; et hinc *montuosus* in eodem sensu, idest plenus montibus; unde hec *montuositas*, -tatis.' *Montuosus* is given in the *Elementarium Doctrinae Rudimentum* (written circ. 1060) of Papias. The word is evidently used here in the sense attributed to it by Joannes de Janua, i. e. 'locus plenus montibus.'

² A passage in Dante's contemporary, Ristoro d'Arezzo, would at first sight lend much more plausible colour to such a claim of anticipation. 'Quella contrada là ove si trovano questi monti, là ove si trova la rena e l'ossa del pesce, è segno che per quella contrada fosse già il mare, o acqua in modo di mare.' But a few lines before we find that this is attributed to the Deluge (B. VI. c. 8).

³ Or as Dr. Shadwell has put it, confusing facts which have been matters of ordinary observation from the earliest times, with the scientific presentation

reading into vague and general language a precise and definite meaning, which it does not involve but which might possibly not be inconsistent with it¹. If this is all that can be urged in the way of 'anachronisms,' or 'anticipations of later knowledge,' we may safely challenge our opponents to produce a single word or idea in this work, which, so far as scientific insight goes, could not have been expressed by Dante, or indeed for the most part by those who preceded him by many generations. But if this be so, the tables are surely turned, and we have another very strong argument against the work being a late forgery, especially by one whose scientific interests and training gave him the '*capacità a delinquere*.' It would be extremely difficult, practically almost impossible, thus to entirely avoid anachronisms, nearly 200 years after the assumed date, and in the greatly altered conditions of scientific knowledge.

The adverse arguments that might be drawn from the assumed existence of anachronisms of scientific knowledge having now been disposed of, we proceed to consider others that have been derived from the supposed internal evidence of the work. The principal of these further objections commonly urged is that both the introductory words and the colophon are unlike the style of Dante in the 'registration' of his own name (see *Purg.* xxx. 63). It is said that Dante never elsewhere gives the *place*, *date*, and *motive* of his compositions (see *Quaestio*, §§ i. and xxiv.). We may reply:

(1) This composition is unique in character among all the works attributed to Dante. If it truly originated in the way in which it purports to have done, nothing could be more natural than that these details should have been given. On the other hand, in most of the other works of the author such details would be quite out of place, or out of the question. Almost the only exception would be the of those facts for which we have had to wait in many cases till long after the time of Dante.

¹ Another instance is the sapient suggestion of Biagioli that *Inf.* i. 90:—

'Ch' ella mi fa tremar le vene e i polsi'—

is an indication that Dante to some extent anticipated Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood!

Epistles¹, and in some of them the time and place are in point of fact specified quite as distinctly as here, and his own name also is mentioned.

(2) I am not for a moment contending for the genuineness of every word and sentence of the work as it stands. Moncetti himself admits, evidently with some satisfaction, that he has contributed a considerable amount of editorial touching-up, or, as we might probably prefer to express it, that he has taken considerable liberties with the MS. See *supra*, pp. 311, 317. Also he accepts apparently the compliment paid him by a brother monk, Gavardi²—‘Praeterea opusculum Dantis poetae Florentini plurimis locis adulterinum lucubrationibus minerva tua levigatum effecisti.’ We have no means of judging of the extent of the operations here indicated. It is evident that they are specially likely to have been applied to the introduction and colophon. Though there is no real necessity to assume that this was so, yet it would be sufficient to remove any difficulty that might be felt as to their details. Certainly no one would consider the authority or genuineness of the Gospel according to St. John to be in any way affected if the ‘colophon’ in xxiv. 24, 25, were admitted to have been added by the Ephesian Elders, or even by some unknown and late copyist or ‘editor’ of the Gospel.

The ground is now fairly cleared for the presentation of such positive evidence in favour of the work as the contents seem to supply. The *matter* being found free from serious objection, the *manner of its presentation* has next to be considered.

I have been much struck by resemblances or parallelisms with the acknowledged works of Dante in respect of—

- (1) thoughts ;
- (2) forms of expression ;
- (3) quotations.

I propose to illustrate these in order, premising that I by no means forget the double-edged character of such

¹ Of course I do not forget the extreme (and I venture to think utterly unjustifiable) length to which scepticism has gone in recent years in respect of nearly all the Epistles.

² Quoted *Gior. Stor.*, p. 136.

arguments, at least in general principle. Some of these parallelisms might well be such as a forger would naturally and of set purpose have introduced. If however they are not too obvious, if they are not embedded in the text like lumps of various origin in a conglomerate rock, but form part of the natural texture of the thought and argument, then they are such as lie beyond the reach of any but the most consummate artists in this species of imitation. Such indications, it is true, like the evidence of handwriting, impress different minds very differently. Each person must form his own judgement as to the value and tendency of each piece of evidence. It is not pretended that anything beyond more or less probable conclusions can ever be reached by this method.

1. I propose to trace parallelisms of thought, by examining them as they occur in the successive sections of the Treatise.

Introductory paragraph.—I am not concerned to defend the genuineness of every detail here. But first it may be noted (in whatever way the argument may be used) that when Dante is described as 'inter vere philosophantes minimus'—words which are repeated at the end in § xxxiv.—the description is quite a characteristic one. The *Convito* both begins and ends with similar declarations of humility. See *Conv.* I. i. 68, 'I who do not sit at the blessed table (of knowledge) but, having escaped from the pasture of the vulgar herd, gather up at the feet of those who sit at the feast of that which falls from them,' &c. And again at the end of the *Convito*, looking back on his work and taking leave of it, he says that he will follow the practice of good workmen, 'purposing this not as being a good workman, but as a follower of one that is so' (IV. xxx. 21). Compare *Ep.* viii. § 5, l. 70, 'Assuredly I am one of the least of the sheep of the flock of Jesus Christ.' It is hardly necessary to point out that though the popular conception of Dante from his earliest biographers downwards is that of a proud and supercilious man, yet there is no virtue that he admires and extols so much as humility¹, possibly from a sense that Pride was his besetting sin.

¹ See *supra*, p. 75, and *Dante and his Biographers*, pp. 147-8.

§ i. ll. 3, 4. This denunciation of those who 'judge according to the appearance,' and the pointed antithesis between 'appearance' and 'truth,' are thoroughly in Dante's manner. Giuliani aptly compares *Par.* xxix. 85-87:—

'Voi non andate giù per un sentiero
Filosofando; tanto vi trasporta
L' amor dell' *apparenza*, e il suo pensiero':

and again (illustrating 'multoties' *h. l.*), l. 94:—

'Per apparer *ciascun* s' ingegna, e face
Sue invenzioni.'

To these passages I would add the antithesis in *Canzone* ii. (prefixed to Trattato III. of *Convito*) ll. 82-84:—

'Così quand' ella la chiama orgogliosa
Non considera lei secondo il *vero*
Ma pur secondo quel ch' a lei *parea*':

noting further the language in the comment on this passage in c. x. ll. 22-25: '. . . allora non giudica come uomo la persona, ma quasi com' altro animale, pur secondo l' *apparenza*, non secondo la *verità*'; and in l. 28 this is described as 'sn suale giudicio.' Finally compare *Purg.* xxii. 28-30:—

'Veramente più volte appaion cose
Che danno a dubitar falsa materia
Per le vere ragion che sono ascose':

and *Par.* ii. 56, 57:—

'Retro ai sensi
Vedi che ragione ha corte l' ali.'

§ i. l. 6. The fervid devotion to the cause of Truth all his life through, which is here claimed by the author, is entirely characteristic of Dante, and is expressed by him several times in his genuine works. In connexion with it the well-known passage from *Nic. Eth.* I. vi. 1 is no less than *four times* quoted by Dante with admiration for its sentiment¹. Observe that it is not again quoted here, as a forger would naturally have done. Thus we have the same feeling and sentiment quite naturally expressed without any suspicious repetition of

¹ *Conv.* III. xiv. 79 *seqq.*; IV. viii. 142; *De Mon.* III. i. 17; *Epist.* viii. § 5, l. 84. (See *Studies*, &c., I., Index, p. 339.)

the actual form or phrases with which it is so often associated by Dante. Besides these passages, I would recall the enthusiastic devotion to Wisdom, Philosophy, Truth (all the words occur) expressed in *Conv.* III. xi. 74-153. Note especially 'della filosofia è cagione efficiente la Verità.' See again *Conv.* IV. i. 18, 'Ond' io fatto amico di questa Donna di sopra nella verace sposizione nominata (*scil.* Filosofia, see *Conv.* II. xvi. 19, 20) cominciai ad amare e a odiare secondo l'amore e l'odio suo. Cominciai dunque ad amare li seguitatori della verità, e odiare li seguitatori dello errore e della falsità, com' ella face.' See also the opening words of the *De Mon.* Note too the scornful way in which both here and in *Conv.* I. ix. he denounces those whose pursuit of philosophy is associated with profit. They are no more philosophers (he says) than one who hires out musical instruments is a musician. In *Ep.* ix. § 3, l. 32, he describes himself as 'philosophiae domesticus,' which may well be compared with 'in amore veritatis a pueritia mea continue sum nutritus' in the present passage, and with the expression 'omnibus in philosophia nutritis' in § xxi. l. 24. The dread also which he expresses lest he may become 'al vero timido amico,' in *Par.* xvii. 118, will naturally occur to every one. Finally the necessary combination of the love of Truth with hatred of Falsehood is insisted on in *Conv.* IV. i. 22-41.

§ i. ll. 9, 10. The double duty of both establishing the truth and also of refuting the false is recognized at some length in *Conv.* IV. ii. 121-141, and the relative order of these two processes is discussed, the authority of Aristotle being quoted in favour of beginning with the refutation of the false. This is the method pursued in this Treatise, where the arguments *contra* are first marshalled in order, and then rebutted. The same is the case in the *Convito* l.c., where Dante defends himself for adopting this order, although his language in the corresponding passage of the Canzone might have suggested the reverse. See further *ib.* c. iii. ll. 5-7; and xvi. ll. 16-18.

§ i. l. 12. The writer observes that the tongue of Envy has ever freer play in the absence of its victim. Compare with

this *Conv.* I. iv, where we are told that for three reasons a man's *presence* diminishes the good and the evil that is attributed to him, whereas in his *absence* both are heightened (see ll. 5, 9, 57). Envy is one of these causes, which, while it is stimulated by one's presence¹, is at the same time restrained in its operation thereby, and consequently works more freely against one who is absent (see ll. 42 *seqq.*).

§ iv. *init.* The declaration of the relative dignity of the four elements in the order Earth, Water, Air, Fire, is also found in *Conv.* III. v. 37, where it forms part of a theory attributed to Pythagoras. The general principle 'nobiliori corpori debetur nobilior locus' (words which are repeated *infra*, § 23, l. 14) comes directly from Aristotle, *De Coelo*, II. xiii (293, a. 30), as I have pointed out in *Studies*, I. p. 128; and it is interesting to observe that that is the acknowledged source of Dante's information about the views of Pythagoras and Plato given in that chapter of the *Convito* (see III. v. 52 *seqq.*). Let it be observed that here we have familiarity with the same chapter of Aristotle's treatise displayed, but the prominent quotation is from a *different part* of it, and it comes in here as naturally and appropriately as possible. This is not the kind of resemblance to be expected in a forgery.

§ iv. l. 6. The description of the 'primum coelum' or the empyrean, as the 'nobilissimum continens,' i.e. that which includes within it all the rest, may be illustrated by several passages in Dante, but the correspondence is in the idea rather than any precise form of words. See especially *Conv.* II. iv. 35-37 and *Ep.* x. § 24, ll. 442-447; § 25, ll. 454-463, where the same word 'continens' is applied to it. Compare *Par.* ii. 112-114; xxvii. 113.

§ vi. ll. 5-7. '... cujus oppositum videmus: quare oppositum ejus ex quo sequebatur est verum.' The writer here appeals to the familiar logical principle that the denial of the

¹ Observe that in the *Quaestio* h. l. 'invidiosus' has the unusual sense of one who is the object of envy or hatred. This is not altogether unlike the sense of 'invidiosi veri' in *Par.* x. 138. 'Invidiosi' occurs in its more usual sense in *Inf.* iii. 48.

Consequent of a hypothetical proposition justifies the denial of the Antecedent. The principle is, as I say, 'familiar,' and therefore I only note, without laying much stress on, its occurrence in *De Mon.* II. xii. 26, where it is appealed to and stated in more technical language—'Consequens est falsum, ergo contradictorium antecedentis est verum,' and again in language still more closely resembling the present passage in *De Mon.* II. xiii. 3, 'hoc autem est falsum: ergo contradictorium ejus ex quo sequitur est verum.' See again *infra*, § 10, ll. 11–13.

§ x. l. 10. 'Ut subtiliter inspicienti satis manifestum est.' Giuliani aptly compares the kindred forms of expression, 'chi guarda sottilmente' (*Inf.* xxxi. 53), and 'se ben si pensa sottilmente' (*Conv.* II. ix. 107). To these we may add *Par.* vii. 88, 89, 'se tu badi Ben sottilmente,' and the use in a similar sense of the verb 'assottigliarsi' in *Par.* xix. 82 and xxviii. 63. *Conv.* IV. i. 59 still more closely resembles the language of the present passage:—'siccome veder può chi mira sottilmente.' So also do the following: *Conv.* II. xiv. 143, and xv. 24, 25.

§ xiii. ll. 34–36. We have here an almost *verbatim* repetition of words that occur in *De Mon.* I. xiv. *init.* Compare also *ib.* ll. 15 *seqq.* Though this sentiment is found quite explicitly in Aristotle (665 b 14, 15, for which see *Studies*, I. p. 116), it is not given as a quotation either here or in the *De Mon.* l. c. The resemblance of the two passages is therefore very close in every way. The general principle appealed to is obviously as appropriate in one case as the other, though its application is quite different, and, as it appears to me, nothing could be more natural than that a writer should reproduce a favourite and familiar principle of this kind under these circumstances. But let me again say that I do not rest any great weight of argument on such coincidences, though I confess that I am favourably impressed by this, as by some others. I am aware that they may be looked at differently, but I must maintain that, while this cannot prove the authorship of Dante, they are just what we should expect *if* he were the author.

§ xvi. l. 47. 'Potissima virtus potissime attingit finem,' &c. Compare with this general principle *Conv.* I. v. 71 *seqq.*: 'Ciascuna cosa è virtuosa in sua natura, che fa quello a che ella è ordinata.' As often elsewhere, we have a similar thought without any suspicious similarity of expression.

§ xviii. l. 6. I think I have noticed that when Dante draws illustrations from the elements, having no occasion to mention all four, he selects Earth and Fire, perhaps because they formed the two extremes: e.g. *Conv.* III. iii. 8 *seqq.*¹, and again, *Vulg. Eloq.* I. xvi. 51, where the true reading is 'magis . . . in hac [sc. minera²] quam in elemento: in igne quam in terra.' Also *De Mon.* I. xv. 38-48, where these two elements and their properties are contrasted under the terms 'glebae' and 'flammae.'

The same is at any rate the case here, and, if there be anything in this, the resemblance is far too subtle to have occurred to a forger.

§ xviii. ll. 20 *seqq.* The passage following is thoroughly steeped in Dantesque thoughts and expressions. First, we have the very remarkable distinction between *Natura Universalis* and *Natura Particularis*. I have written a note on this subject in the First Series of these *Studies*, p. 155 (to which reference may be made). From this it appears that Dante in his acknowledged works employs this distinction for various purposes no less than four times³, and that he probably derived it from Albertus Magnus. I have since however found it also in Aquinas, *Summa*, i. Q. 22, Art. 2, especially § 2 of the Conclusio.

The cause which frustrates the perfection of Nature's (or God's) designs is the stubbornness of the subject-matter ('inobedientiam materiae'). This is, of course, not an uncommon thought. It is at any rate very common in Dante elsewhere: e.g. *Par.* i. 129; xiii. 67-78; *Conv.* III. ii. 30;

¹ 'The elements have a natural affection in themselves for their proper place; and consequently *earth* always descends to the centre; *fire* rises to the Heaven of the Moon.'

² Observe too that minerals are here distinguished from elements, as again in *De Mon.* I. iii. 49, and in *Conv.* III. iii. 8-15.

³ Viz. *Conv.* I. vii. 54 *seqq.*; III. iv. 98 *seqq.*; IV. ix. 15-33; xxvi. 18-20.

vi. 60; vii. 20, 46 *seqq.*; xiv. 14 *seqq.*; IV. xxi. 77, 104: V. *El.* I. xvi. 46 *seqq.*: *De Mon.* II. ii. 20-37 (and *supra*, l. 14). In some of these passages (as especially in the last) it is pointed out that God, Nature, and Art are in this respect similarly situated. 'quod (*sc.* coelum) organum est artis divinae, quam Naturam communiter appellant.' Compare *De Mon.* I. iii. 18, 'Deus aeternus arte sua. quae natura est' and the well-known passage in *Inf.* xi. 97-105.

§ xviii. ll. 29 *seqq.* Next we have the argument, in ll. 29-31, that perfection demands that all possible 'forms' of which the 'prima materia' is capable should become actual and not remain potential or undeveloped. See, again, a few lines below (l. 39): 'Si omnes istae formae non essent semper in actu, motor coeli deficeret ab integritate diffusionis suae bonitatis¹: quod non est dicendum.' This is precisely the argument employed by Dante in *Par.* xxix. 37 *seqq.* to refute the opinion of S. Jerome that many ages elapsed between the creation of Angels and that of the Universe ('l' altro mondo,' l. 39). He argues that not only does Scripture prove the contrary, but reason shows that the Angels, who are the 'motori' of the Heavens and all the Stars and Planets, should not have remained so long without their perfection (ll. 43-45). For thus their functions would have remained so long dormant: existing only *ἐν δυνάμει*, not *ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ*, 'quod non est dicendum.'

Nor is this passage in the *Paradiso* the only one in which this principle is enunciated and employed in argument. It occurs again in *De Mon.* I. iii. 24-29, and more particularly *ib.* ll. 73 *seqq.*: 'Sicut necesse est (*sc.* esse) multitudinem rerum generabilium, ut *potentia tota materiae primae semper*

¹ Then again the thought that any such undeveloped activity would be a diminution of the diffusion of God's goodness—where we might perhaps have rather expected his power or the perfection of his handiwork to be thus impaired—this also is a favourite thought of Dante. See *De Mon.* I. viii. 15-17: 'quum totum universum nihil aliud sit quam vestigium quoddam divinae bonitatis.' Again *ib.* II. ii. 15 *seqq.*: 'Est enim natura in mente primi motoris, qui Deus est. deinde in coelo tanquam in organo, quo mediante similitudo *boni. alis* aeternae in fluitantem materiam explicatur.' Add *Par.* ii. 130-8; xiii. 52 *seqq.*; xxix. 16-18; and *Conv.* III. vii. 11-13: 'Ov' è da sapere che la divina *bontà* in tutte le cose discende; e altrimenti essere non potrebbero;' and many other passages.

sub actu sit, aliter esset dare potentiam separatam quod est impossibile.' And (as *h. l.*) Averroes is quoted in support of this, but from a different work, viz. 'in Commento super iis quae de Anima.' See further *De Mon.* I. iv. 1-4.

Observe in this place and elsewhere in the *Quaestio* how familiar Dantesque principles offer themselves, quite naturally and easily and without any appearance of being obtruded, for the solution of entirely new problems.

Further, the expression 'motor coeli' is used exactly as in *De Mon.* I. ix. 10 *seqq.*: 'Et quum coelum totum unico motu, scilicet primi mobilis, et unico motore, qui Deus est, reguletur in omnibus suis partibus, motibus, et motoribus,' &c. Compare *Par.* ii. 127-132. Again in *Ep.* x. § 20 *init.*, the first line of the *Paradiso*—

'La gloria di colui che tutto move'

—is paraphrased thus: 'gloria *primi motoris*, qui Deus est,' &c.

Next, we have the doctrine familiar to Dante of the 'compleSSIONi' or 'qualities,' which, being superadded to the simple form of 'materia prima¹,' produce different kinds of material or corporeal existence, 'formae materiales generabilium et corruptibilium.' All such forms of existence, except the elements themselves, imply an admixture or combination of qualities. The very final cause of the elements is to serve the purpose of such 'mixture' and thus to make possible all the various forms of corporeal existence. From this point of view these resulting forms of existence are described as 'mixta' and the elements themselves as 'miscibilia.' Obviously (the argument proceeds) there cannot be 'mixtio' unless the 'miscibilia' can come into contact; hence of necessity there must be in the universe some such common meeting-point for all the elements. But this cannot be unless the earth somewhere or other rises above the

¹ In *Conv.* IV. i. 64 Dante says that in his youth he was specially interested in speculations respecting the origin of the 'prima materia degli elementi.' The definition of 'prima materia' given by Albertus Magnus illustrates the present passage: 'substantia in potestate existens et nullam omnino formam habens in actu' (*De Cosmo et Mundo*, I. Tr. iii. c. 4). See Supplementary Note, p. 356.

water¹. Thus, and thus only, can earth, water, air and fire be provided with a common meeting-point; while if they were not so provided, then some forms of corporeal existence could never be developed, and would remain 'potential' only, and not realized 'in actu,' 'quod non est dicendum.'

But next, how can this purpose of Universal Nature be fulfilled²? The 'Particular Nature,' or, as it is here called, 'Simplex Natura,' of Earth is to move *downwards* only. Hence there must be in it some other influence (*alia natura*³) to counteract this, enabling it to *rise*, 'ut mixtio sit possibilis' (§ 19, l. 6), and so to fulfil the intention of 'Universal Nature.' Thus it would become capable 'fuor di sua natura'⁴ of rising partially⁵, through the influence of the heavens, 'tanquam obediens a praecipiente'⁶ (l. 60).

Finally, this upward tendency, counteracting the 'natural' downward tendency of the element Earth, is illustrated by the parallel case of human nature itself, in which the appetites and passions naturally drag it down, but yet when subject to reason they can escape their proper tendency ('*a proprio impetu retrahuntur*'). Any one familiar with the *Convito* and *De Monarchia* must feel how thoroughly Dantesque all this is. The 'subiectum mixtum et complexionatum' recalls the language of *De Mon.* I. iii. 49, where minerals

¹ This then is the *final cause* of the partial elevation of the earth. See xix. l. 6, and xx. l. 6.

² Cf. *Conv.* III. iv. 98, 'la Natura Universale, cioè Iddio.'

³ Compare the way in which the expression ἄλλη τις φύσις τῆς ψυχῆς is used in *Nic. Eth.* I. xiii. 15, and see also § 19, l. 4, where 'natura quaedam' is similarly opposed to 'simplex natura.'

⁴ As Dante says in the converse case of fire *falling* from a cloud in *Par.* xxiii. 42.

⁵ See also § 19, l. 20, where this expression 'in parte' is further explained by the statement that 'terra emergit per gibbum, et non per centalem circulum circumferentiae.' Thus the 'terra emergens' forms a lump or excrescence on the regular circumference of the element earth, the major part of which is in its natural position below the sphere of water. It is important to insist on this because, as we read in l. 7, 'secundum haec salvatur concentricitas terrae et aquae.'

⁶ Compare ὥσπερ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀκουστικόν τι *Nic. Eth.* I. xiii 19, especially noting that Aristotle is here speaking of the 'pars concupiscibilis.' See § xviii. l. 6a.

as distinguished from elements are called 'complexionata'¹. See also *Conv.* III. iii. 14 where minerals are given as the simplest instances of 'corpora composte'; and compare the expression 'corpo misto' *ib.* l. 45. Again the upward and downward tendencies of the different parts of Man's Nature are familiar to us in Dante from *Conv.* III. iii. 41-91 and *Vulg. Eloq.* II. ii. 46-55. The particular expression 'proprius impetus' here, reminds us of the 'impeto primo' of *Par.* i. 134. But the 'impeto primo' of that passage stands in contrast with the 'proprius impetus' of special parts of our nature which is here referred to. The latter would rather correspond to the 'falso piacere' of the passage cited from the *Paradiso*. See the whole context, ll. 130-135, where the same conflict is described as that indicated in this sentence of the *Quaestio*, though the result of the conflict is different in the two cases. The 'impeto primo,' working undeflected, may be illustrated by the beautiful passages in *Par.* iv. 124-132, and *Conv.* IV. xii. 140 *seqq.*

Thanks to the careful researches of Professors Luzio and Renier as to the character and abilities of Moncetti, I feel that I could as soon believe him capable of inventing another Canto in the *Divina Commedia*, as of forging this eighteenth section of the *Quaestio*.

§ xix. It would be scarcely possible to give a more exact and concise description of Dante's system of Geography, or one more thoroughly Dantesque in language and expression, than that which is contained in this section. At the same time, I cannot detect any direct copying, or embodiment of single phrases, such as would be temptingly ready to a forger's hand in the well-known Fifth Chapter of the Third Trattato of the *Convito*.

¹ The very difficult passage in *Par.* vii. 139 *seqq.* should also be compared, where we have Angels and the Human Soul described as emanating directly from God (l. 142) in contrast with Elements, things compounded of those Elements (ll. 133, 134), and the 'Souls' of Plants and Brutes ('di *complexion potenziata*,' ll. 139, 140), all of which come into being through a separate creative act, or through the developing influence of that which has been itself created. The first-named are consequently (it is argued) immortal, and the latter not so. With this we may compare the argument in *De Mon.* I. iii. 60-62.

§ xix. l. 69. The somewhat contemptuous reference to women in the words 'sicut manifestum esse potest etiam mulieribus' is (it must be sadly admitted) thoroughly Dantesque. In the opening words of the *De Vulg. Elog.* Dante justifies the purpose which he has in hand on the ground that common language is indispensable for every one, and 'not only men, but even women and children strive to acquire it, as far as Nature allows them!' (*Vulg. Elog.* I. i. 6, 7). In c. iv of the same treatise Dante cannot believe but that spoken language first proceeded from the mouth of man rather than that of woman, though the first recorded utterance in the Bible is that of the 'most presumptuous Eve¹'. . . 'It is not suitable to suppose ("inconvenienter putatur") that so noble an act of the human race as speech should have first proceeded from a woman rather than a man.' Again, see *Conv.* IV. xix. 76 *seqq.*, where, after quoting the saying of Aristotle that αἰδώς is out of place in men of full age or of high character, because they ought not to do anything to be ashamed of, Dante says that this does not apply to 'youths or to women,' because so much is not demanded of them in this respect (ll. 88, 89). Again in *Ep.* x. § 10, ll. 224, 225, the language of Comedy is 'remissus et humilis, quia loquutio vulgaris, in qua et mulierculae communicant².'

§ xx. l. 27. This reference to Solar Eclipses as resulting from the Moon's interposition between the Earth and the Sun resembles a passage in *Conv.* II. iii. 57. There the phenomenon is appealed to as a proof of the fact of the Moon's position; here the discovery of that fact by this means is given as an illustration of the way in which knowledge is gained through the stimulus of inquiry, proceeding from effects to causes, or through the desire to explain something unusual. This process is exemplified by the question in hand, viz. the investigation of the cause of the elevation of the land. A thoroughly Dantesque argument follows. This elevation cannot be due to any of the four Elements,

¹ Comp. *Purg.* xxix. 24-30.

² Ristoro d' Arezzo (a monk) writes in much the same strain: 'questa luna, a cagione di sua viltà, potemo dire per ragione ch' ella sia femmina!' (B. III. 7).

Earth, Water, Air, or Fire, for various reasons. It remains, therefore, that it must be due to 'Coelum,' probably as being the 'quinta essentia,' which is also variously described as 'Aether' or 'Coelum.' [See illustration of this in *Studies*, I. pp. 124, 300¹.] Then, as there are several Heavens, to which can this elevating influence be attributed? Not to that of the Moon, because that would operate on both hemispheres alike. Here there is clearly implied in the background that absence of land in the Southern hemisphere to which Dante so often refers, though it is nowhere here explicitly stated. The equal declination North and South of the Equator in the case of the Moon (which is next asserted) is thus expressed by Alfraganus — 'Eccentrici Lunae planum . . . a zodiaci plano deflectit ad septentrionem et austrum declinatione rata et immutabili' (c. xviii. p. 68). The opponent is then supposed to suggest that the eccentricity of the Moon's orbit may account for her exercising this elevating influence so much more largely in the Northern hemisphere. The author's reply to this is, that, if the eccentricity of the Moon's orbit were taken into account², her influence would be *stronger* in the Southern than in the Northern hemisphere. This implies that she is *nearer* to the Earth on the South side of the Equator. I cannot find any recognition of this in Alfraganus or elsewhere, but if it were anywhere maintained that the eccentric centre of the Moon's orbit lay to the North of the centre of the Earth, the above result would naturally follow.

Alfraganus (c. xxi) gives the *minimum* and *maximum* distance of the Moon as 109,037 and 208,542 miles respectively, the latter corresponding with the *minimum* distance of the next Heaven, viz. that of Mercury (and so in the case of the succeeding Heavens). But I cannot find anything to

¹ To these passages we may add Sacrobosco, *de Sphaera*, I. c. 2: 'Circa elementarem quidem regionem aetherea regio, lucida ab omni variatione sua immutabili essentia immunis existens, motu continuo circulariter incedit, et haec a Philosophis quinta nuncupatur essentia. Cuius novem sunt sphaerae' &c., and then the nine 'Heavens' are enumerated in the usual order.

² That the Moon's orbit is eccentric is assumed as beyond doubt also in §§ 7 and 23.

imply that the *minimum* distance or Perigee was associated with her position South of the Equator, as seems to be implied in the text. It was certainly known that the Sun is in fact nearer the Earth when he is in the Southern hemisphere, or, speaking technically, that his Perigee occurs then, and his Apogee when he is North of the Equator¹. It seems probable that this may have been thought to apply to the Moon also, in which case we should have the condition which the text here implies. Further, the opening words of § 21 appear distinctly to extend the same condition to the Planets likewise. Obviously, such a fixed Apogee and Perigee is quite out of the question in the case of the Planets, since they do not in fact revolve about the Earth at all. But as Dante imagined them all to do so eccentrically, there is nothing *prima facie* impossible in the supposition of a fixed Apogee and Perigee under such circumstances, though it can never have been verified or supported by observation. The belief, however, seems to have been somewhat persistent, since I find Galileo in his *Opere Astronomiche* (vol. ii. p. 87, ed. 1843) dealing with an objection to the Copernican system based on the allegation that Copernicus maintained that Venus had a fixed Apogee, whereas 'l' auge di Venere non è immobile come il medesimo credette.' In the case of the Moon, the assumption of a fixed Apogee is in point of fact equally untrue.

§ xxi. The possibility of the influence of any of the 'planetary' Heavens is excluded then by these considerations, and that of the *Primum Mobile* by its absolutely equable and homogeneous character², so that it could not affect one hemisphere more than the other. This brings us by a process of exhaustion to the eighth or Stellar Heaven, which has a great variety of Stars and Constellations, and consequently exercises various degrees of influence in its several parts. This is

¹ See Ristoro d' Arezzo, B. I. 23 : ' sotto la rivoluzione dell' opposito dell' auge (Apogee) del sole, lo quale è quasi 18 gradi in Sagittario ; imperciò che il sole, stando in quel punto, vae più presso alla terra che in nulla altra parte.' So also says Roger Bacon, *Op. Maj.* Part IV, c. iv. (i. p. 137) : ' Oppositum augis (i. e. Perigee of the Sun) est in Sagittario.'

² This may be compared with *Par.* xxvii. 100, 101 ; *De Mon.* I. ix. 11.

precisely the doctrine expressed by Dante in *Par.* ii. 115-138; where we may note especially ll. 115-117:—

‘Lo ciel seguente, ch’ ha tante vedute,
Quell’ esser parte per diverse essenze
Da lui distinte e da lui contenute.’

The parallelism is often very close:—

Compare ll. 12-14 with *Par.* ii. 130-138.

„ ll. 14-17 „ „ 64-66, 115-117, 137 *seqq.*

„ ll. 16, 17 „ „ 70, 121.

(cf. § xx. l. 59)

„ l. 25 „ „ 139.

Note also the similarity in the use of *vultus* in the quotation from Ptolemy (l. 30) with *volti* as used in *Par.* ii. 66.

We must not fail to observe too how the writer regards belief in Stellar influences as being so fundamental and beyond all possible question that he applies to it (by implication) the well-known *dictum* of Aristotle¹ that those who deny fundamental principles are ‘out of court’ in argument. This belief is indeed so prominent in Dante’s several works, and is so often insisted on by him, that it is not worth while to illustrate it by references. One passage may suffice in which (as here) it is treated as an almost axiomatic truth. See *Conv.* II. xiv. 27 *seqq.*: ‘Della quale induzione . . . cioè della generazione sustanziale, *tutti i filosofi concordano che i cieli sono cagione*; avvegnachè diversamente questo pongano.’

§ xxi. l. 27. The superior efficacy and influence of the Stars in the neighbourhood of the Equator which is implied in ll. 25-29, and also exemplified by the case under discussion in ll. 40 *seqq.*, would be explained by more than one passage in Dante. See especially *Conv.* II. iv. 75: ‘Onde le stelle del cielo stellato sono più piene di virtù tra loro, quanto più sono presso a questo cerchio’ (*scil.* lo cerchio equatore, cf. *ib.* ll. 85, 86). Here again, in our text, we note there is no direct or manifest repetition of this or any other previous passage. It is not definitely stated (as a forger would have been likely to do) that there is this superiority of

¹ Compare *supra*, § xi. l. 9; *Conv.* IV. xv. 162; *De Mon.* III. iii. 122.

influence in the Equatorial Stars. The words are merely 'alia virtus est' (l. 27), and even in l. 40 the greater intensity of influence is not formally expressed, though we quite understand that it is 'at the back of the writer's mind.' This is not the manner of a forger's work.

The totally unscientific alternative suggestions made in ll. 42-46 may be commended to those who imagine marvellous anticipations of modern physical theories in the *Quaestio*. In one of these alternatives we may recognize the writer's acquaintance with the curious suggestion of Aristotle, that some mountains have originated from the expulsive force of pent-up vapours in the bowels of the Earth. This occurs in a part of the *Meteor.* which was at any rate familiar to Dante, as I have shown in *Studies*, I. pp. 130-131, &c. See also list of passages from *Meteor.* II. quoted in the Index, p. 336.

§ xxi. ll. 47 *seqq.* I have spoken already (see p. 320) of the supposed difficulty involved in the motion of tidal water being one of elevation ('motus rectus,' § xii. ll. 40-42) and not circular, though it is caused by, and described as 'imitating,' the Heaven of the Moon, which has a circular motion (see §§ vii, and also xxiii. ll. 49 *seqq.*). This supposed anomaly is specifically dealt with in § xxiii, but here the same difficulty is raised in respect of the limitation of the 'dry land' to 180° of longitude (see on this § xix). If that elevation is caused (as is here maintained) by the influence of the eighth Heaven, whose motion is circular, why (it is objected) is not the elevation also circular? i.e. Why is it limited to 180° out of 360°? The answer given is truly an amazing one:—'quia materia non sufficebat ad tantam elevationem'! In other words, 'there was not enough material to go any further.'

The blunt and almost contemptuous audacity of such an explanation, especially when we find it made the starting-point for a solemn denunciation of those who are too presumptuous in inquiring into the reason of things—

'qual più a guardar oltre si mette'¹—

¹ *Purg.* xxiv. 61.

is so astonishing and original, that I cannot conceive any forger being so bold as to have invented it. At the same time not only is the spirit of it quite characteristic of Dante, but even the *bizarre* notion itself is illustrated by *Inf.* xxxiv. 121-126, where it is declared that the dry land which is now congregated in the Northern, was originally in the Southern hemisphere. Lucifer, when cast out from heaven, fell upon it, and from fear of him it covered itself with the sea as with a veil, and *came to our hemisphere* :—

‘Da questa parte cadde giù dal cielo :
E la terra che pria di qua si sporse
Per paura di lui fe’ del mar velo,
E venne all’ emisferio nostro.’

This would certainly seem to imply that there was not enough material for both.

But this is not all, for let us further note the principle involved in the objection dealt with here, and again in § xxiii. ll. 49 *seqq.*, since it was one with which Dante was familiar, and it seems to have been accepted by him as a sound one. See *Conv.* III. ii. 35-41 : ‘Onde conciossiacosachè ciascuno effetto ritenga della natura della sua cagione, siccome dice Alpetragio quando afferma che quello ch’è causato da corpo circolare ha in alcuno modo circolare essere,’ &c.¹ Next, see *Conv.* IV. xxiii. 47 *seqq.* : ‘Ciascuno effetto, in quanto effetto è, riceve la similitudine della sua cagione, quanto è più possibile di ritenere.’ The application of this principle which follows is worthy of our careful notice. It is this. Our whole life is moulded by the influence of the heavens, but such influence is not effected through a complete circle (‘cerchio compiuto’) but only through that part of the heavens which lies above us, i. e. a *semicircle* forming an arch ; *consequently* the life of man and that of all other creatures resembles an arch!—‘convengono essere quasi ad immagine d’ arco assimiglianti.’ In this curious argument we observe the precise principle, the recognition of which causes the difficulty in this passage ll. 47-49, and also in § xxiii. ll. 49-52. Our author

¹ Compare the expression in *Par.* viii. 127 : ‘La circular natura ch’è suggello Alla cera mortal’

here admits its force and feels that it requires an answer¹. Would any forger have lost the opportunity of calling attention to the general principle, which would not be too obvious to his readers, on which the whole force of the objection rests?

Next let us note the particular point in which the alleged 'presumption' is supposed to consist. It is in asking *why* the elevation should occur in the North rather than in the South? and this is presumptuous because it in effect involves the question why there are more Stars in the Northern than in the Southern hemisphere. Thus it is like, as Aristotle says, asking why the heavens revolve from East to West and not from West to East. See ll. 55 *seqq.* (So in *Conv.* II. vi. 148 *seqq.* Dante similarly regards it as presumptuous to inquire into the precise cause of the revolution of the *Primum Mobile*). For it cannot be doubted (says the writer here) that when it seemed good to God that the Earth should be elevated in this part, because it was better that it should be so (l. 68), He also ordered that the Stars by whose influence that result was brought about should be appropriately situated to bring it about: 'simul et virtuatum est coelum ad agendum, et terra potentiata ad patiendum' (ll. 70-72). Also see ll. 34-36: 'quod similitudo virtualis agentis consistat in illa regione coeli quae operit hanc terram detectam.'

§ xxi. *fin.* l. 70. Observe finally the tacit assumption that the heavens and their influence supply the instrument or efficient cause, by the agency of which God's purposes in the world are naturally carried out. This is clearly the general principle implied, though not obtruded upon us, here. How thoroughly Dantesque it is may be seen from *De Mon.* II.

¹ If any further proof be needed of the familiarity of Dante with this principle stated more generally, see *De Mon.* I. xiii. 13 *seqq.*: 'Nihil igitur agit, nisi tale existens, quale patiens fieri debet; propter quod Philosophus . . . Omne, inquit, quod reducitur de potentia in actum reducitur per tale existens in actu.' Compare *Canzone*, iii. 52, 53:—

'Poi chi pinge figura
Se non può *esser lei*, non la può porre.'

Also *Conv.* IV. x. 80-82: 'tutte le cose che fanno alcuna cosa, conviene essere prima quella perfettamente in quello essere.'

ii. 15 *seqq.*: 'Est enim natura in mente primi motoris, qui Deus est, *deinde in coelo tanquam in organo*, quo mediante similitudo bonitatis aeternae in fluitantem materiam explicatur¹'; and again *ib.* l. 25: 'quum Deus ultimum perfectionis attingat, *et instrumentum ejus (quod coelum est)*,' &c.; and *ib.* l. 31 it is declared that any defect in results is 'praeter intentionem *Dei naturantis et coeli*.' See also *Ep.* v. § 8, where Dante is describing how God sometimes employs human agencies to bring about results which seem altogether beyond the reach of human effort, and in that case he works 'per homines, *tanquam per coelos novos*².'

§ xxii. Entirely, at any rate, in the spirit of Dante is the denunciation of presumptuous speculation from § xxi. l. 54 onwards, as well as the pious acknowledgement of the Divine Wisdom and Providence exhibited by the phenomena of the Universe. Compare *Conv.* III. v. 196 *seqq.*; IV. xxi. 49 *seqq.*; *Par.* x. 13-21, and many other places. Finally, the language of § xxii in particular may be compared with that of *Conv.* IV. v. 7-10, 69-79; *De Mon.* II. xi. 64 *seqq.*, xiii. 59; *Ep.* x. § 28, ll. 531-569, &c., &c. In *Ep.* x. § 2, l. 36, 'Spiritus Sanctum audiat,' &c. may be compared with 'audiant propriam Creatoris vocem,' &c., *h. l.* l. 19.

§ xxiii. ll. 25-38. It is, I think, worth noting how tempting it would have been to a forger to repeat some of the language, or of the illustrations, or of the Aristotelian references, to be found in *Conv.* IV. viii. 42-83, where this same subject of the deceptiveness of the evidences of the senses is dealt with at length. There is, however, no trace of this.

§ xxiv. I have already admitted that I am not concerned to maintain the genuineness of this colophon as it stands, although I see no special difficulty in accepting it. It is just the part where the license of editorial assiduity would find freest scope (compare the subscriptions to the Epistles of

¹ Quoted for another purpose *supra*, p. 334 n.

² We might perhaps compare with this an expression of Albertus Magnus when speaking of the effects ('virtutes') of different localities on 'generation':— 'Philosophi . . . praecipiant considerare virtutes locorum quasi *stillas secundas*,' *De Nat. Locorum*, Tract. II. Cap. i. *fin.* (v. p. 280).

S. Paul). But it contains a delightfully keen thrust of sarcasm, in every way worthy of Dante himself, against those of the Veronese clergy who neglected to attend this lecture (see ll. 7-13). The absentees are men who will neither accept the propositions laid down by others, nor come and listen to what they have to say. In regard to this last point, they are described as men of such profound humility, these '*Spiritus Sancti pauperes*¹', that to avoid the very appearance of approving of excellence—in others—they refuse to be present at their discourses. This original conception of a vicarious humility, which shrinks from recognizing the merits of others—which, in fact, men display by 'a consciousness of one another's imperfections'—may well have proceeded from the pen of him who once sarcastically apologized for addressing the Cardinals, though a layman: 'seeing that I am not abusing any pastoral office, because I have no wealth'²!

I have not found elsewhere (though it seems quite in character with mediaeval thought) that the *birth* of our Lord, as well as His Resurrection, occurred on a Sunday (see l. 17). It may be added that in 1320, Jan. 20 did in fact occur on a Sunday, viz. the Second Sunday after Epiphany.

2. *Parallelisms in single expressions* (see *supra*, p. 327).

To these correspondences in thought and opinion with those of Dante I will now add a few parallelisms, out of many which I have noticed, in style and in single expressions. Though the presence of such similarities will not prove his authorship, for the imitation of such details would be easy, yet their absence might go far to disprove it, and (as I have urged before) if Dante were the real author they would certainly occur.

I may note, perhaps, in passing, the peculiar use of the verb *existere* for the ordinary substantive verb as in i. l. 2; v. l. 8; xix. l. 45; xxiii. l. 29, &c. This is found over and over again in *De Mon.* (in passages too numerous to quote), and again in *De Vulg. Eloq.* I. xv. 12, &c. But I do not lay much stress

¹ Compare the expressions '*pauperes Dei*' in *Par.* xii. 98; and '*pauperes Christi*' in *De Mon.* II. xii. 4, and III. x. 130: and with '*nimia caritate ardentis*' (l. 8) compare '*caritate arserunt*' in *De Mon.* III. iii. 67.

² See *Ep.* viii. § 5, ll. 72, 73.

on this, as I have found it to be not uncommon in other writers of the period.

§ iv. l. 6. The use of the active 'continenti' is parallel to that of the passive 'contento' in *Inf.* ii. 77, *Par.* ii. 114.

§ v. l. 13, 'dorso maris.' Cf. *Conv.* III. v. 83, 94, 'dosso del mare.'

§ vi. l. 3 (and elsewhere), 'terra detecta.' Cf. *Conv.* III. v. 73, 'terra discoperta.'

§ xi. *init.* 'Ad evidentiam igitur dicendorum duo supponenda sunt.' Comp. *Vulg. Elog.* II. ii. 46: 'Ad quorum evidentiam sciendum est, quod,' &c.; and *De Mon.* III. iv. 45, 46: 'ad meliorem hujus et aliarum factarum solutionum evidentiam, advertendum,' &c.

§ xii. l. 36, 'rideret Aristoteles si audiret.' Cf. *Conv.* IV. xv. 59: 'Senza dubbio forte riderebbe Aristotile udendo,' &c.

§ xv. l. 6. The singular semi-poetic designation of the Ocean as 'Amphitrite' is met with again in *Ep.* vii. § 3, l. 58, 'fluctus Amphitritis attingens'¹.

§ xviii. l. 46. The use of the highly technical word *complexionatum* as in *De Mon.* I. iii. 49 has been already spoken of *supra*, pp. 336, 337.

§ xix. l. 63. With 'vel quasi'='or nearly so,' cf. *Par.* i. 44, 'Tal foce *quasi*,' exactly in the same sense.

§ xx. ll. 42, 48. The twice-repeated expression 'per se loquendo' is found similarly used in *De Mon.* II. vi. 26.

In § v. and again in § xviii. Averroes is quoted simply as 'Commentator.' Compare with this *Conv.* IV. xiii. 68: 'chi intende il Comentatore nel terzo *dell' Anima*.' In *De Mon.* I. iii. 76 we find a somewhat different form of citation: 'Averrois in Commento super iis quae *de Anima*.' In these two passages, as well as in this § v., the Commentary of Averroes on the *de Anima* is quoted, but the *passages quoted are different*, while in § xviii. it is a *different work* that is cited.

¹ Probably following the phraseology of Albertus Magnus, who frequently uses Amphitrite for the circumambient Oceanus, e. g. *Meteor.* II. Tr. ii. c. 12, *init.*: 'aquae sive sint in Amphitrite, sive sint in concavitatibus.' Also *ib.* c. vi.; *De Nat. Loc.*, Tr. i. c. 9, &c., &c. In *Meteor.* II. Tr. iii. c. 9 we read: 'Amphitrix (*sic*) est ergo locus proprius et primus omnium aquarum.'

The general result again is to show a familiarity with the works of him 'che il gran comento feo,' and a similarity in the form of reference, without any direct repetition of former quotations.

In §§ vi. and xxiii. a quotation from Aristotle is introduced by the formula 'ut patet per philosophum in Meteoris suis.' We may compare with this *Ep.* x. § 10, l. 229, 'ut per Horatium patere potest in sua *Poetica*'; and § xxxiii. l. 614, 'ut patet per Johannem ibi' (comp. § vii. l. 141). See also *De Mon.* III. vii. 19, 'ut patet ex iis quae de Syllogismo simpliciter'; *Ep.* x. § 10, l. 202, 'ut patet per Senecam in suis *Tragoediis*'; l. 205, 'ut patet per Terentium in suis *Comoediis*'; and often elsewhere. In fact the use of 'patet' in a great variety of phrases must strike every one who reads the Latin works of Dante. But, again, though it occurs very often in this Treatise, I have scarcely found any such phrases exactly repeated; e. g. *Q.* xv. 24; xix. 70, compared with *De Mon.* II. vi. 67, &c.

I owe the following¹ to the suggestion of Dr. Shadwell:—

§ xii. l. 28. The singular expression 'gleba terrae' which occurs here may be compared with *De Mon.* I. xv. 38, where we find 'plures glebas' in contrast with 'plures flammas,' the elements of Earth and Fire being thus designated. (See further, *supra*, p. 333.)

§ xx. l. 58. 'habeat reduci.' This curious piece of Latinity occurs again in *De Mon.* III. xii. 60, 87, 90, 100, &c. I have also noticed it in *De Vulg. Elog.* I. iii. 17, 'cum [*sc.* genus humanum] aliquid a ratione accipere habeat.'

Under this head may be noticed the exact resemblance of the construction of the arguments, their technical details and logical formulae, with those of the *De Monarchia*, and indeed also of the *Convito*, allowing for the difference of the language in the latter case. Note the frequent use of 'instantia' = *ἐνστάσις* [ix. l. 8², xviii. l. 1, xix. l. 3, &c., and compare *De*

¹ And no doubt much else. But one cannot always remember the exact source of much that one may find in one's notes, especially when they were made for private use without any thought of publication.

² Observe too *h. l.* the peculiar use of the verb *instare* corresponding to this:— 'Instabitur contra demonstrata, et solvetur instantia'; and compare with this

Mon. II. vi. 67, III. v. 36; *Conv.* IV. xxii. 98, &c. We have 'instanzia' also so used in *Par.* ii. 94], 'distinctio' [cf. *De Mon.* III. iv. 126, viii. 15, &c.], 'determinatio' (§ xi. l. 8), 'interemptio,' 'solvere' and 'dissolvere' rationes or argumenta. All these will be so familiar to readers of the *De Monarchia* that special illustration is unnecessary. Note also the formulae for closing an argument such as, 'ut de se patet' [*Q.* § xiv. l. 8, and *De Mon.* I. viii. 28, III. ii. 25, &c.]; 'ut patet intuenti' [*Q.* § xviii. l. 54, cf. *supra*, p. 332], or 'sicut manifestum esse potest' [*Q.* § xix. l. 69 compared with *De Mon.* I. iv. 30; xii. 38, &c.]. Again, compare the blunt dismissal of an opponent's argument in *De Mon.* III. xi. 14, 'Dico quod nihil dicunt,' with § xxiii. l. 11, 'dico quod non est verum.' Add to this also § xxiii. l. 40: 'dico quod illa ratio fundatur in falso; et ideo nihil est'; and l. 45, 'sed istud est valde puerile,' &c. Again compare 'Concedo minorem' in § xxiii. l. 16 with the same formula in *De Mon.* III. viii. 23.

These similarities, or many of them, would be no doubt easily within a forger's reach, but, as I have noted already, this is not in itself an argument *per contra*, since in the case of a work being genuine they would be certain to occur. But even here one is struck not so much by the mechanical repetition of identical phrases as by the close similarity of the manner, one might almost say, the mannerisms, with which successive arguments are introduced and dismissed.

3. *Quotations.*—It remains to speak of the quotations found in this work, which are, as in the acknowledged works of Dante, very numerous. We will compare them in their range and sources, and in the formulae of their introduction. In the First Series of these *Studies* I have noted twenty-two direct and formal quotations, and ten references, some of which latter are as certain as actual quotations, and others more or less probable, in all, thirty-two¹. Twenty-four come from Aristotle, six from Scripture, and one each from Orosius and

De Mon. III. vii. 23: 'si quis instaret de vicarii aequivalentia, inutilis est instantia.'

¹ This list is reprinted at the end of this Essay, with the quotations numbered for convenience of reference.

Ptolemy. The large proportion from Aristotle would naturally follow from the subject in hand. Those from Scripture, with every part of which Dante was familiar, call for no special remark, except that one passage, Rom. xi. 33, is twice besides quoted by Dante, viz. in *Convito* and *De Monarchia*. A citation from Orosius was naturally to be expected if Dante had to speak on a subject of geography, as in *Quaestio*, § 19. The same chapter in Orosius is quoted by Dante in *De Mon.* II. iii. 87. The quotation from Ptolemy is given vaguely and without further special reference to its source, as in the two other places where he is quoted by Dante, both occurring in *Conv.* II. xiv.

As to the Aristotelian quotations (using at present the marginal numbers of the list printed *infra*, p. 357), they may be analyzed thus:—

(i) The following quotations are actually made by Dante elsewhere:—

Nos. (4) and (17) occur in *Convito* and *De Monarchia*; (10) and (11) are both very familiar; (18) is found in the *Convito*, but in very different language. To these we may perhaps add (9), which, though not given either here or in *De Mon.* I. xiv. (*ter*) as a formal quotation, is evidently the reproduction of one or more passages in Aristotle. See *Studies*, I, p. 116.

(ii) The following passages are not formally quoted elsewhere, but numerous other quotations, or implied references, occur, which come from the same Chapter or the same Book of the Aristotelian Treatise.

Thus (3) is from *Meteor.* II, a Book probably referred to by Dante eight times. See *Studies*, I, p. 336.

(5) from *Nic. Eth.* I. vii, a Chapter six times quoted or referred to elsewhere.

(13) from *Nic. Eth.* I. xiii, a Chapter well known to Dante.

(23) from *De Coelo* II. } both Books very familiar to Dante.
(32) from *Meteor.* I. }

We might perhaps mention here (6), which, though from the *De Coelo*, occurs in Book IV, which is not quoted elsewhere by Dante.

(iii) The following are clearly referred to here, though not formally quoted, and are from treatises familiar to Dante :—

(2), (8), (12), from *De Coelo*, Book II.

(20) from *Metaph.* A. ii.

(26). § xxii. ll. 3–5. This evident reminiscence of Aristotle is interesting, since it occurs as a definite quotation in *Conv.* IV. xiii. 71, 72, and in both cases we find the *same peculiar variation from the text of Aristotle*, which, as I have pointed out in *Studies*, I, p. 105, is probably due to its being indirectly quoted through the language of S. Thomas Aquinas. This surely has all the character of a genuine ‘undesigned coincidence.’

(iv) These seem unimportant or doubtful :—

(16), (19), (21), (22). (They are all given only under Class ‘c,’ except 21, which is marked ‘b,’ but the difference of marking is merely one of opinion.)

(v) There are three quotations from two of the logical works of Aristotle, viz. *Categ.* and *Prior Anal.*, with both of which Dante in his works shows acquaintance, if not familiarity. The formal logical treatment of the present subject would make such references probable and natural.

See Nos. (1), (7), (14).

There is surely nothing in this analysis which betrays in any way the hand of a forger, and both the character of the quotations in (ii) and (iii) and the occurrence of a larger proportion of such quotations than of (i), are, as far as they go, indications of genuineness.

A forger would be likely to copy and repeat identical quotations, and would hardly be so subtle as thus to look up others from the same work, or, as in the case of Averroes, from a different work of the same author quoted *nominatim*.

It remains to consider some points in the formulae of quotation.

(a) The Books of the *Meteora* are twice quoted with the formula, ‘ut patet per Philosophum in *Meteoris* suis’ (§§ vi. and xxiii.)¹. Now it is remarkable that, though numerous references seem to occur in the admitted works of Dante to

¹ On this formula of quotation see *supra*, p. 348.

this treatise (I have noted about twenty as more or less probable), it is nowhere else quoted by Dante directly or by name (see *Studies*, I, Index No I.).

(β) The two quotations already mentioned from the *Categories* are cited as coming from the *Praedicamenta* (§ ii.), and the *Antepredicamenta*, where ch. i. is quoted (§ xii.). This treatise is only once elsewhere named by Dante, viz. in *De Mon.* III. xv. 58, and there as 'doctrina Praedicamentorum.' There is therefore nothing here calling for further remark.

(γ) In the case of the quotation from *Prior Anal.* (§ xix. l. 19), the formula is peculiar, 'ut ille dicit in primo *Priorum*.' There is only one other direct quotation of this work, viz. in *De Mon.* III. vii. 19, and there the formula is 'ut patet ex iis quae de Syllogismo simpliciter.' There is absolutely nothing in this slight difference, except that, so far as it goes, it is against the theory of forgery. We may observe that Dante himself has at least three different formulae for quoting the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle, 'Metaphysica' (or in *Conv.* &c., 'Metafisica'); 'Prima Philosophia' (*Conv.* and *De Mon.*), and 'in iis quae de simpliciter Ente' (*De Mon.*). Also there are two different formulae for the quotation of the *Ethics*, and two for the *Physics*.

(δ) The same consideration will apply to the quotation of the *De Coelo et Mundo*, in one of the three places in which it is by name referred to, simply as *De Coelo* (§ xxi. l. 55). Even this is found once in *Ep.* X. § xxvii. l. 511¹, though the fuller form is constant in the *Convito*.

¹ I am of course aware that of late years the genuineness of this Epistle has been disputed, but, as it appears to me, very capriciously, and on utterly insufficient grounds. Besides what I have said *supra*, p. 267, note 2, I should like to draw attention further to the significance of the fact pointed out by Mr. Toynbee, that the derivation of 'Tragedy' given in § x. comes directly from Uguccone. Not only is Uguccone quoted explicitly by Dante for information of this kind in *Conv.* IV. vi., but Mr. Toynbee has proved that Dante is constantly indebted to Uguccone for his etymologies, though this is nowhere else acknowledged by him. Mr. Toynbee has argued in reference to *Epist.* x. (as I have done on the last page) that a forger is not likely to have ascertained this obscure source of Dante's etymologies, and then to have employed it once, and that anonymously, imagining that his work would thus gain some semblance of probability.

(ε) The sole remaining difficulty, if such it be, in the quotation by name of the *Meteora* might well be explained by the isolation in point of date of this latest prose work assigned to Dante. But, in truth, it needs no explanation, for we have seen that Dante uses no rigid uniformity in his formulae of quotation, and the occurrence of *un*uniformity, just in proportion to its noticeability, is likely to have been avoided by a forger, especially by one so careful and so observant as we have seen the supposed writer in this case must have been.

In connexion with the subject of the quotations occurring in this work, I will mention another argument which appears to me to have very considerable weight. I chanced to notice when reading Dr. Schmidt's monograph already referred to¹, that he considered the author of this treatise to have borrowed something from the *Composizione del Mondo* of Ristoro d'Arezzo. I was at once struck with the important bearing of this fact, if fully established, upon the authorship of the work. The date of the work of Ristoro—who is described by his Editor (Narducci) as 'the Humboldt of the thirteenth century'—was 1282, and it might therefore very easily have been accessible to Dante². But afterwards the work of Ristoro remained practically unknown for centuries³. It was first published in 1858 by Narducci; reprinted with the addition of a textual reproduction of the Chigi MS. in the following year; and republished in a cheap 12mo form by Daelli & C^{ia} (Milan) in 1864. A communication was made to the Accademia della Crusca in 1815 by Francesco Fontani

¹ It should be mentioned that Dr. Schmidt's Essay is not concerned with the question of the authorship of the *Quaestio*. He assumes throughout that it is a genuine work of Dante, and this is the starting-point of his whole argument, which is, as the title implies ('*Dante's Stellung in der Geschichte der Kosmographie*'), to determine Dante's position in the development of physical knowledge. The Essay on the *Quaestio* is only the first portion of the subject, but the second, dealing with the evidence to be gathered from his other works, appears never to have been published.

² On Dante's knowledge and use of contemporary or recent literature, see *infra*, Appendix, p. 363.

³ Only five MSS. of it are known to exist, three at Florence and two at Rome.

briefly describing this work as though it were a 'discovery' made among the MSS. of the Bibl. Riccardiana, and chiefly treating it as a 'testo di lingua.' He speaks of Ristoro as one whom 'non si conosce che di puro nome,' and adds that all his efforts to find out anything about him at Arezzo or elsewhere had been entirely in vain¹. This shows how completely the work of Ristoro had been forgotten. I have collected in a supplementary note some evidence to show, (1) that Dante was almost certainly acquainted with this work of Ristoro; (2) that it can scarcely be doubted that the author of the *Quaestio* had knowledge of it. If so, I would ask confidently, (i) What *possibility* was there of Moncetti, or any one else in his day, acquiring a knowledge of the treatise of Ristoro? (ii) Even could he have done so, what *probability* was there of his having 'got up,' for the purpose of his forgery, a very obscure writer whom Dante never once mentions, and with whom there was no *prima facie* reason to suppose that he was even acquainted? (iii) Supposing a forger should by any means have obtained access to one of the MSS. of Ristoro, it would probably have been his chief, if not sole, authority on this obsolete question. It is scarcely conceivable then that, instead of following it, he should have taken a totally independent and even opposite line respecting some of the most fundamental positions affirmed in it. This he does on the following important points:—(1) The main subject of the thesis itself: for Ristoro maintains that the water of the sea is higher than the land. (2) The explanation by this means of the appearance of springs of water on the tops of mountains, since the weight of the superincumbent mass forces the water through the interstices and subterranean channels (which are compared to veins) of the 'spongy' earth, so that its reappearance at great altitudes is only the natural result of water finding its own level². This view is ridiculed by the author

¹ See Introduction to Narducci's Edition, p. v.

² Hence there is a continual circulation of water: 'secondo questa via potemo per ragione dire che l'acqua corre giù per lo fiume sia già corsa molte volte, e l'acqua che piovve sia già piovuta molte volte,' B. VI. c. 7 (p. 85).

of the *Quaestio* as the opinion of 'vulgares et physicorum argumentorum ignari,' and as being 'valde puerile'¹ (§ xxiii. ll. 41-48). (3) The *modus operandi* of the emergence of the dry land, according to Ristoro, is not, as is declared in the *Quaestio*, the elevation of the land (§ xxi. ll. 40 *seqq.*), but the rolling back and piling up of the water, by which the land is left bare, though still occupying its natural position 'in sua sphaera'.² It cannot be imagined that a sixteenth-century forger, if he used the work at all, should have treated it in this manner. If Dante himself was acquainted with it (as I hope to show), nothing could be more natural, and the recent promulgation of these erroneous views may have been one of his motives for thus 'determining' the question.

In conclusion, I repeat that I am fully aware that no array of arguments from internal probability alone can ever fully establish the genuineness of such a work as this. But I think they can be, and are in this case, sufficient to justify the demand that the question should be regarded as a fairly open one. Such considerations (as I have also already admitted) appeal with very different force to different minds. I can only say for myself that the more I study this work the more and more am I impressed with the conviction that it is thoroughly Dantesque in the whole texture of its style, language, and forms of thought. If internal evidence alone can *ever* be allowed to establish the genuineness of any work, I can hardly imagine a case in which it could be more convincing than this. The difficulty of supposing any one else to have written it (and above all Moncetti, for reasons given above) appears to me nearly insuperable. But this subjective impression cannot be expected to have any weight with those who do not share it. To quote the words of Lowell in reference to the genuineness of some of the disputed works of Shakespeare:—'It is something very difficult to define, this impression which convinces us without argument,' but it is 'better than all argument.' It is, at any

¹ Dante himself had a better explanation of the phenomenon. See *Purg.* v. 109-111, 115 *seqq.*; xxviii. 121-123; *Studies in Dante*, I, pp. 133, 134, 300.

² See *infra*, Appendix, p. 365.

rate to those who feel it, like that 'inward surety' which the same writer elsewhere contrasts with

'doubt

Muffled from sight in formal robes of proof¹.

Unless therefore some far more conclusive evidence of forgery is forthcoming than has yet been advanced. I shall unhesitatingly believe this to be a genuine work of Dante, corrupted possibly in some of its details, but still in all essential points the production of the same mind and pen to which we owe the *Divina Commedia*, the *De Monarchia*, and the *Convito*. Should this be really the case, I shall be proud to have contributed in ever so humble a degree to rescue it from the suspicion, not to say general condemnation, into which it has recently fallen.

¹ From *Latest Literary Essays*, p. 120; and *The Cathedral*, ad fin.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

P. 335 n. In further illustration of the doctrine of the 'prima materia,' as in *Quaestio*, § 18, it may be added that S. Augustine draws a similar distinction between the 'prima materia' and the 'Elements.' He holds that the creation of the former was the work of the First Day, and that of the 'Elements' of Water and Earth, the work of the Second and Third Days respectively. Besides several other passages in *De Genesi ad Literam*, the following may be quoted from B. II. c. 24. Commenting on Gen. i. 1, he says:—'nihil aliud his verbis quam *materiae corporalis informitatem* insinuare [Scriptura voluit], eligens eam usitatius appellare quam obscurius . . . cujus informitatem usitato, ut dixi, vocabulo vel terrae vel aquae Scriptura praedixit.' He adds that the creation of the 'Elements' (or 'species propriae') of Water and Earth is indicated in the words 'Congregentur aquae, et appareat arida.' Aquinas glosses S. Augustine's view thus:—'Ideo per congregationem aquarum et apparentiam aridae impressio talium formarum designatur,' *Summa*, i. Q. 69, Art. 1.

QUOTATIONS IN THE *QUAESTIO DE AQUA ET TERRA.*

[Reprinted from *Studies*, I. p. 394.]

- (1) *a.* *Quaestio*, ii. l. 5 Ar. Categ. viii. (10 *a.* 11).
- (2) *b.* ——— iv. *init.*; xxiii. l. 14 . . . Ar. De Coelo II. xiii. (293 *a.* 30).
- (3) *a.* ——— vi. l. 12 Ar. Meteor. II. ii. *fin.* (356 *a.* 33, *b.* 1).
- (4) *a.* ——— xi. l. 11 Ar. Phys. I. ii. (185 *a.* 1-3).
- (5) *a.* ——— xi. l. 14 Ar. Eth. I. vii. 21 (1098 *b.* 3).
- (6) *a.* ——— xii. l. 44 Ar. De Coelo IV. i. (307 *b.* 31).
- (7) *a.* ——— xii. l. 56 Ar. Categ. i. *init.* (1 *a.* 1-4).
- (8) *b.* ——— xiii. ll. 12-30 Ar. De Coelo II. iv. (287 *b.* 4-14).
- (9) *b.* ——— xiii. l. 35 Ar. Part. Anim. III. iv. (665 *b.* 14, 5).
- (10) *a.* ——— xiii. l. 41 Ar. De Coelo I. iv. (271 *a.* 33)¹.
- (11) *a.* ——— xiii. l. 42 Ar. Gen. Anim. II. vi. (744 *a.* 36)².
- (12) *b.* ——— xvi. ll. 51-55 Ar. De Coelo II. xiv. (296 *b.* 9-18).
- (13) *a.* ——— xviii. l. 68 Ar. Eth. I. xiii. 15-7 (1102 *b.* 13
seqq.).
- (14) *a.* ——— xix. ll. 18-20 Ar. Anal. Pr. I. xli. (49 *b.* 34 *seqq.*).
- (15) *a.* ——— xix. l. 43 Oros. Adv. Pag. I. ii. 7, 13.
- (16) *c.* ——— xx. ll. 4-6 Ar. Anal. Post. II. vii. (93 *a.* 20).
- (17) *a.* ——— xx. l. 16 Ar. Eth. I. iii. 4 (1094 *b.* 23-25).
- (18) *a.* ——— xx. l. 23 Ar. Phys. I. i. (184 *a.* 16 *seqq.*).
- (19) *c.* ——— xx. ll. 25-28 Ar. Metaph. H. iv. (1044 *b.* 10-15).
- (20) *b.* ——— xx. l. 28 Ar. Metaph. A. ii. (982 *b.* 12).
- (21) *b.* ——— xx. ll. 39-54 Ar. De Mundo iii. (392 *b.* 35 *seqq.*).
- (22) *c.* ——— xxi. ll. 44-46 Ar. Meteor. II. viii. (366 *b.* 15 to
367 *a.* 4).
- (23) *a.* ——— xxi. l. 55 Ar. De Coelo II. v. (287 *b.* 26-31).
- (24) *a.* ——— xxi. l. 31 Ptolemy (!)
- (25) *a.* ——— xxi. l. 69 Gen. i. 9.
- (26) *b.* ——— xxii. ll. 3-5 Ar. Eth. X. vii. 8 (1177 *b.* 31 *seqq.*).
- (27) *a.* ——— xxii. l. 6 Job xi. 7.
- (28) *a.* ——— xxii. l. 9 Ps. cxxxviii. 6.
- (29) *a.* ——— xxii. l. 11 Is. lv. 9.
- (30) *a.* ——— xxii. l. 15 Rom. xi. 33.
- (31) *a.* ——— xxii. l. 20 John viii. 21.
- (32) *a.* ——— xxiii. l. 47 Ar. Meteor. I. ix. (346 *b.* 23-31).

¹ And elsewhere.

² Also elsewhere in B. II.

APPENDIX ON DANTE AND RISTORO D'AREZZO

IN order not to interrupt the text by too long a digression¹ I have put together here the main grounds on which I believe (I.) that Dante was probably acquainted with the work of his slightly earlier contemporary Ristoro d'Arezzo, entitled *La Composizione del Mondo*, which was written in 1282: (II.) that the author of the *Quaestio* almost certainly was familiar with that work (the latter being evidently much the more important of these two points for the reasons explained in the text, p. 354): (III.) that the question here discussed was still open and undecided in Dante's time, and excited the interest of those who were 'in philosophia nutriti' (§ xxi), or, as we should now say, 'scientific men.'

I. RISTORO AND DANTE.

There are a great many passages in Ristoro exhibiting striking similarities of thought and expression with those occurring in the acknowledged works of Dante, but I lay no stress on them, because they are to be found in other authors to whom Dante had access, and whom he certainly used, such as Alfraganus, Albertus Magnus, Brunetto Latini, &c. Such, for instance, would be the relative position of the elements both *inter se* and in reference to the planetary spheres; the characteristics of the four elements in reference to the 'contrarie qualitadi' of hot, cold, moist, and dry, as well as the application of the same qualities to the four seasons (as in *Conv.* IV. xxiii), the mixture of the elements as a necessary condition of generation, or the development of minerals, plants, and animals, &c., &c. The following points however seem (in various degrees) to show some definite relationship between the authors.

¹ For, as Dante himself says in apologizing for a similar digression, 'li lunghi capitoli sono nemici alla memoria,' *Conv.* IV. iv. 133.

(1) In *Conv.* III. v. 142 *seqq.*, Dante graphically describes the revolution of the Sun on the day of the Equinox as it would be seen from the North Pole, viz. that it would go round the horizon, its upper half only being visible, with a horizontal revolution like that of a millstone. The same comparison occurs in Ristoro, I. c. 23 (p. 28), 'a modo di macina.' This however might also have been borrowed from Alfraganus, 'molae trusatilis instar' (c. vii.). But this is not the case with the remarkable description which follows of the gradual daily elevation of the Sun for ninety-one and a quarter days till he reaches the Tropic of Cancer, so that the path he describes will be *spiral* 'like the screw of a press' (a guisa d' una vite d' un torchio). This is again referred to by Dante in *Par.* x. 32, 33:—

' Si girava *per le spire*
In che più tosto ognora s' appresenta.'

Now this is not only exactly described by Ristoro in the same passage, but a diagram of the *spire* is added. The Sun's path is graphically described as 'una via descritta ed avvolta a circonda sopra la terra 365 volte e quarta, la quale fuor tali savi che la chiamaro *spira*; e troviamola avvolta dintorno alla terra *come un filo avvolto su per uno bastone*.'

(2) Again, in the same Chapter of the *Convito*, ll. 188, 189, Dante observes that at the Equator there are two summers of fierce heat, viz. at the Equinoxes, and two slight winters ('piccioli verni'), viz. at the Tropics. This also is found in the same Chapter of Ristoro (p. 32), but it does not occur in Alfraganus¹. Ristoro recurs to it again in B. VI. 9 and 11, and elsewhere.

(3) The doctrine of the love of the several elements for their own place, described by Dante in *Conv.* III. iii. 8 *seqq.* ('le corpora semplici hanno amore naturato in sè al loro loco proprio'), is found in very similar language in Ristoro in B. VI. Dist. vii. (p. 96):—'ciascheduno desidera d' andare et di stare nel suo luogo e non altrove.'

(4) The metaphor so often employed by Dante of the *suggello* and the *cera* (e. g. *Purg.* xviii. 38; *Par.* i. 40, 41; ii. 130–132; viii. 127; xiii. 67–69; *De Mon.* II. ii. 74, &c., &c.) occurs over and over again in Ristoro. I have found it at least six or seven times. One passage only need be quoted, as involving a singular application of the analogy, from

¹ It should be added that it is found in another author who was at least accessible to Dante, Joannes de Sacrobosco (d. 1256), *de Sphaera*, B. III. c. 4.

B. VI. c. 3 (p. 79). The writer proves that there must be mountains and valleys on the Earth, because it, as 'cera,' takes the impression of the Heaven as 'suggello'; and Heaven may be considered to be 'montuosa' and 'vallosa,' because, the stars being at various distances from the Earth, we should have to ascend and descend in passing from one to the other. See also B. VII. Part. i. c. 2 (pp. 96, 97).

(5) The beneficent effect of the precise inclination given to the Zodiac, and the disastrous consequences to the 'generazione' of plants and animals if it were different, are expounded at length by Ristoro, B II. c. 3 (p. 37) and elsewhere; as it is by Dante in *Par.* x. 13-21. See especially Ristoro, *l. c.*, where the inclination of the Zodiac is said to be the best possible, 'che sia utile alla generazione,' and again, 'pare che, se il sole non si potesse dilungare nè appressare alle parti della terra, la generazione perirà, nè la terra nè l'acqua non potrebbe fare frutto.' Compare *Par.* x. 16-21 and especially l. 18:—

'E quasi ogni potenza quaggiù morta,'

Again, with ll. 19, 20:—

'E se dal dritto più o men lontano
Fosse il partire,' &c.

compare Ristoro: 'E proveremo ch' egli non può essere declinato nè più nè meno ch' egli è, ch' egli non facesse danno.'

(6) The whole doctrine of the 'Angeli Movitori' of the several heavenly spheres, though doubtless to be found elsewhere, is described by Ristoro in language remarkably like that of Dante in the *Convito*. See *Conv.* II. ii. 62-65: '... certe Intelligenze, ovvero per più usato modo volemo dire Angeli'; and II. v. 5-8: 'li movitori di quello sono Sustanze separate da materia, cioè Intelligenze, le quali la volgare gente chiama Angeli.'

Compare Ristoro, I. c. 23 (p. 32 *med.*): 'Pon mente al cielo, che si volge. Or chi il volge? conviene di necessità che sia spirito questo; diciamo noi che sono angeli; i savi ben videro questo, e dissero che questi erano spiriti d' intelligenza... sono mossi da spiriti intellettuali, i quali non veggiamo.' And later, in p. 134 (*Dist.* viii. c. 2) we find the very word '*intendere*' applied to their *modus operandi*, as in Dante, *Cans.* I. l. 1, and *Conv.* II. vi. 151: 'Quanti sono li corpi principali e perpetui nel mondo, tante sono intelligenze, le

quali *intendono* in operazione,' &c. ; and a few lines below, 'le quali *intendono* sopra la generazione.'

(7) In *Conv.* II. xv. Dante describes the fatal consequences that would ensue if the revolution of the Heavens, and in particular that of the *Primum Mobile* which was communicated to all the others, were suspended, and he concludes:—'Di vero non sarebbe quaggiù generazione, nè vita d' animale e di piante . . . ma tutto l' universo sarebbe disordinato,' &c.

Compare with this Ristoro, *Dist.* vii. Part ii. c. 4 (p. 101):—'E se la virtude del cielo tornasse nel cielo, e se 'l cielo non si movesse, non farebbe tutta la sua operazione, e mescolerebbe li elementi insieme, e farebbesene la generazione degli animali, e delle piante e delle miniere, la quale egli significa ed ha in sé di fare ¹.'

(8) Compare *Par.* viii. 12, where Venus is described as the star

'Che il sol vagheggia or da coppa or da ciglio,'

with Ristoro, I. c. 18 (p. 17 *fin.*), where Venus is said 'scintillare e *vagheggiare* . . . e accompagna e va tuttavia quasi col sole, e quando le va dinanzi, e quando dietro.'

(9) Again, Ristoro (*Dist.* viii. c. 6, p. 139) declares that the seven Planets have a special correspondence with the seven Sciences of the Trivium and Quadrivium. He further says that the Moon corresponds with *Grammatica*, Mercury with *Dialectica*, and Venus with *Musica*, but he proceeds no further with the comparison. Every one will remember with what minuteness Dante elaborates similar analogies for all the planets (as well as for the three remaining Heavens) in *Conv.* II. xiv. It will be noticed that in the case of the Moon and Mercury the Sciences allotted to them by Dante and Ristoro are the same ; but Venus is associated by Dante with Rhetoric, and by Ristoro with Music.

(10) In a well-known passage, *Purg.* vi. 78, Dante describes Italy as

'Non donna di provincie, ma bordello,'

implying that she had forfeited the former honourable title. Now Ristoro, *Dist.* vii. c. 6 (p. 116), has the identical expression, 'Italia, la quale e *donna di tutte le provincie.*'

(11) As a minor resemblance, which may however very

¹ This is obscure, but no difference of reading is given. The context seems to imply it to mean that 'generation' would not proceed, as now, from an orderly and regular mixture of the several elements, but from a chaotic jumble of them all together.

likely be accidental, I would note the expression 'lucerna del mondo' applied by Dante to the Sun in *Par.* i. 38 and also by Ristoro in I. c. 18 (p. 17), 'è in questo mondo come lucerna nella casa.' He further says that he is called 'Sole, quasi *solo* in questo mondo'!

(12) There is a very singular explanation of the Lunar Spots in Ristoro corresponding exactly with that adopted by Dante in *Conv.* II. xiv. 73-76, and afterwards repudiated by him on the alleged authority of Beatrice in *Par.* ii. 59 *segg.* Ristoro (in a somewhat obscure passage, B. III. c. 8, p. 67) explains that some parts of the Moon are 'hard,' 'opaque' (*ottuso*), 'bright.' These parts, like a mirror, are 'receptive' of the light, so that it can be passed, drawn, or thrown, on to other objects (*passare, trarre, gittare*, are all used). This is the case with the stars. Other parts of the Moon are 'soft,' 'transparent,' 'dark.' These cannot 'receive' the light and pass it on, but they, as it were, 'retain' it themselves, so that it is not reflected to other objects. Such is the case with the Earth¹. Compare with this the language of the *Convito*, l. c., 'la quale (sc. l'ombra) non è altro che rarità del suo corpo, alla quale non possono *terminare i raggi del sole e ripercuotersi* così come nell'altre parti.' The 'rarità' in Dante corresponds with the 'soft,' 'transparent,' or 'dark' parts of the Moon in Ristoro, in both cases the characteristic feature being the *incapacity to reflect the light*. But not only is this explanation found in Ristoro, but it is not found, as far as I know, in any other of the sources from which Dante would have been likely to derive it. There is nothing of the kind in Alfraganus, Brunetto Latini, Roger Bacon, or Albertus Magnus. The last-named is the only one of these authors who touches on the subject, and his explanation has nothing in common with this (see *De Coelo et Mundo*, B. II. Tr. iii. c. 8). Another passage however is cited by Mr. Toynbee from the *De Juventute et Senectute*, where the 'terrestris natura' of the Moon is assigned as the cause of her retention of some of the Sun's light. But Mr. Toynbee considers the *De Substantia Orbis* of Averroes to be the source of Dante's crude 'Lunar Theory' as given in the *Convito*, l. c. As this very work is cited (by Dante?) in the *Quaestio*, § 18, such an origin is not improbable. But the detailed explanation of the *modus operandi* of the 'dense' and 'rare' parts of the Moon, in

¹ This antithesis between the Earth and stars is insisted on because the Moon, holding an intermediate position between the stars, which are all light, and the Earth, which is all dark, necessarily partakes of the nature of both. The same principle, though otherwise applied, is formulated by Dante in *De Mon.* III. xvi. 32.

reflecting or absorbing the solar light, much more nearly resembles the language of Ristoro than anything either in Averroes or Albertus Magnus. It seems to me therefore most probable that Dante derived his theory from Ristoro.

These are some results gathered from a somewhat rapid survey of the work of Ristoro. It is probable that a more careful study would suggest further resemblances. That Dante did know and freely used the writings of several other of his contemporaries is quite certain, e.g. (1) Brunetto Latini's *Tesoretto*. See Nannucci, *Manuale della Letteratura*, i. p. 461, where a considerable number of passages from the *Divina Commedia* are given, in which phrases and expressions from the *Tesoretto* are repeated. That he also made use of the *Tesoro*, or *Trésor*, is beyond doubt (cf. *Inf.* xv. 119). (2) Guido Guinicelli is frequently borrowed from or imitated by Dante. See Nannucci, *op. cit.* pp. 46-48. (3) Also Jacopone da Todi (d. 1306), *ib.* pp. 384-386. (4) Bernard de Ventadour¹ seems certainly to have suggested the celebrated simile of the lark in *Par.* xx. 73-75. (5) Another extremely beautiful simile in *Purg.* xxii. 67-69 seems to be taken directly from Messer Polo da Reggio (c. 1239), as is pointed out by Scartazzini in his note *h. l.*

It is difficult to understand how in the days before printing, or formal publication, the works of authors became so well known to their contemporaries, but that they were so is quite certain.

II. RISTORO AND THE *QUAESTIO*.

We now pass on to the second and much more important point, viz. that at any rate the author of the *Quaestio* was familiar with the Treatise of Ristoro. This would be what we should expect if Dante were the author, but it would be scarcely conceivable in the case of a forger in the sixteenth century, for the reasons pointed out *supra*, pp. 353, 354.

The chief thing that strikes one in Ristoro is the singular prominence of the idea that the elevation of the Earth is caused by the influence of the stars. But for that influence, the Earth would 'naturally' be all covered with water, because the sphere of water is above that of earth. See, *inter alia*, I. c. 20 (p. 19): 'Conciò sia cosa che li elementi sieno sperici, e compia l' una spera l' altra, appare, secondo ragione, che la terra debbia essere coperta intorno intorno dall' acqua. . . . E noi troviamo una parte della terra scoperta dall' acqua ;

¹ See First Series of these *Studies*, p. 303.

e secondo i savi è la quarta parte¹ scoperta, sì che tre parti rimane sotto l' acqua; ed in questo luogo troviamo una grande forza, e la terra è levata per forza dello suo luogo, e stae rilevata per forza sopra l' acqua, e l' acqua per forza cessata via; e questa forza fue a cagione della congiurazione delle pianete e delli animali c' abitano sopra la terra' (i. e. the signs of the Zodiac, &c.). 'E troviamla scoperta inverso la parte di settentrione, sotto quella parte del cielo la quale è piu stellata.' See further B. VI. c. 2 (p. 78), where it is stated that, if this influence were suspended, the water would turn again and cover the earth. 'Se la virtù del cielo, che dee tenere l'acqua cessata che non spanda, per mantenere la terra scoperta, si cessasse e andasse via, l'acqua cessata converrebbe in suo luogo, e coprirebbe tutta la terra.' It is hardly necessary to point out the correspondence of this with the theory advocated in *Quaestio*, § xxi., where we note that the elevation of the land in the Northern hemisphere between the Equator and the Polar Circle is due to the *superior power of the stars in that region of the heavens* (ll. 40-42; see further ll. 70-72). Now this is stated over and over again by Ristoro. I have noted more than ten places in which he dwells upon the fact that the Northern hemisphere has a far larger number of stars, and also stars of greater magnitude and importance, than the Southern hemisphere. In several of these places he connects this fact with the corresponding position of the 'terra detecta,' e.g. at the very beginning (B. I. c. 2):—'E vedemo la parte di settentrione, la quale è inverso lo polo artico, *spessa e vestita di stelle*, e la parte del mezzodì, la quale è inverso lo polo antartico, a quello rispetto *rada e ignuda di stelle*.' Again, B. IV. c. 4: 'là ove sono le molte figure e le molte stelle, in quella parte dee essere per ragione molta virtude, e molta potenza, e molta operazione.' See B. VI. c. 1, quoted p. 371, and I. 20, *supra*. Also B. I. 9 and 10, *Dist.* viii. c. 12 (*bis*), &c., &c. In particular, in the passage last referred to he refutes the doctrine of Averroes that the Southern hemisphere was probably inhabited like the Northern, because 'una grandissima inconvenienza' would follow, viz. that in that case the Southern hemisphere should also be 'piena e soffolta di stelle,' whereas the reverse is the case².

¹ 'Quarta parte' appears again in B. VI. c. 2, and it is added that therefore 'la chiamarono "quarta abitabile".' So also in c. 7. Compare *Quaestio*, § 2: 'quam communiter *quartam habitabilem* appellamus.'

² It is noteworthy that, while Albertus Magnus also attributes the emergence of the land to the stars, the *modus operandi* is quite different, for he supposes the sun and stars to dry up the 'quality' of *humidum*. 'Quae quidem (sc. aqua)

Again, the hint is dropped in *Quaestio*, § xxi. l. 21, that not only the number and magnitude of the Northern stars but the *figures and forms of the constellations* 'which cannot be purposeless' are to be taken into consideration, since not only different stars but different constellations have varying degrees of influence. This also is found several times in Ristoro, who speaks of the greater dignity of the figures represented by certain constellations, which are mostly in the Northern hemisphere. He notes also how most of them have their heads towards the north and their feet to the south, as another indication of the superiority of that part of the heavens (B. I. 9 and 10; IV. 4; VI. 1, &c.) Moreover in *Dist.* viii. c. 12 (quoted last page) this is given as another reason against there being any land in the Southern hemisphere, for, the figures of the constellations having their backs turned to that hemisphere, 'per ragione dee essere impedita la loro operazione, da non potere adoperare'! (p. 147).

Next, as to the *modus operandi* of this stellar influence, Ristoro suggests two alternative theories (B. VI. c. 2). He says that we may suppose the 'vertude del cielo' either to have raised the earth out of the water, or to have repelled the water, so that, by the piling up of the water, the earth became uncovered, while its position was not changed. He adopts the latter hypothesis for several reasons which we need not repeat¹. The author of the *Quaestio* also suggests two alternatives in § xxi. ll. 42 *seqq.*: either attraction like that of a magnet (which is the same as Ristoro's first suggestion), or repulsion (not in the sense of Ristoro's second alternative, though that implies also a kind of repulsion) by generating vapours forcing the land as it were to bulge out, 'ut in particularibus montuositatibus.' This refers, no doubt, to the generation of volcanic cones, a process described minutely by Ristoro as one of the causes of the production of mountains in *Dist.* vii. Part iv. c. 6 (p. 115) ('una ventosità che s'ingenera nel ventre della terra') and in

totam terram) operire deberet, si motus solis et aliarum stellarum eam in parte non exsiccaret.' Again, speaking of the sun and stars he says (quoting Albumassar, 'Oportet quod exsiccet in ea humidum in locis super quae sunt anguli acuti radiorum, et in locis super quae radii perpendiculariter incident.' He then employs this as an argument to prove that, as the same conditions exist in the Southern hemisphere, it probably has land and 'climata' resembling those in the north, and that the common belief in that hemisphere being covered with water is not to be accepted. *De Nat. Locorum*, Tr. I. c. xii. (v. p. 277).

¹ On the important practical application by Ristoro of his theory of the *piling up* of the water to account for the origin of springs at high altitudes v. *supra*, p. 354. See especially Ristoro, B. VI. c. 7 (*passim*), and the passages quoted from it *infra*, pp. 368, 369.

B. VI. c. 8 (p. 86): 'e anche potrebbe *enfiare* la terra su e fare lo monte.'

In particular, the metaphor of the magnet as applied to the process of stellar attraction in *Quaestio*, § xxi. l. 43 is employed more than once by Ristoro, e.g. B. VI. c. 1 (the chapter quoted *infra*), c. 7, and in other passages¹.

It may be added that Ristoro accounts for *everything* by the influence of the stars. It is the point which strikes us most by its continual recurrence. It explains (as we have seen) the irregular contour of the Earth's surface; the division into seven climata is 'per l' operazione dei pianeti' (B. VI. c. 9, VIII. c. 16); all the phenomena of nature and the events of human life (B. VII. c. 4) are referred to the stars. They too raise stones, snow, hail, rain, &c., into the air, which has none of such things in it naturally, and then they fall again upon the Earth. Heat and cold, drought and flood, occurring 'fuori di ragione,' are brought about 'per la congiurazione delle stelle, *che isforzano la ragione*.' The Great Deluge itself was thus caused (B. VI. c. 13). Upon this follows a curiously rationalistic explanation (for a thirteenth-century monk) of Noah's 'foresight.' If ever such circumstances should occur again, 'se alcuno savio sarà in quelle parti, che sappia bene della scienza delle stelle, provederassi d' innanzi e vedrà (?) sè e tutta la sua famiglia, secondo che si dice che fece lo savio Noè: che si provide innanzi, per la scienza che gli fue data, e guardò sè e tutta la sua famiglia dal pericolo del diluvio nell' arca.'

The author of the *Quaestio* in § xix. three times describes the form of the emergent Earth as semi-lunar. See l. 61: 'Sic patet quod terram emergentem oportet habere figuram semilunii, vel quasi.' (So also *supra*, ll. 24 and 34.) So says Ristoro, B. VI. c. 11, *fin.* (p. 90):—'Ed avemo la terra scoperta, come è la figura della luna, quando noi la veggiamo mezza².' Also a little earlier in the same chapter Ristoro declares that 'l' acqua è cessata della terra circolarmente, come ella dee essere per ragione alla spera della terra.' Compare with this the language of *Quaestio*, § xix. ll. 29–33.

Lastly, the peculiar argument of *Quaestio*, § xviii., has already been sufficiently explained³, viz. that the final cause of the 'terra detecta' was to render possible the generation or development of all kinds of concrete existence (see ll. 42–54).

¹ One of the most curious features of Ristoro's work is its confused arrangement, so that we meet with the same statements repeated over and over again.

² Albertus Magnus, *De Nat. Loc.* Tr. iii. c. 1 (v. p. 284) describes it as a sort of trapezium with spherical sides: 'haec habitatio quadrangula est inter quattuor arcus.'

³ See *supra*, pp. 305, 335.

This is also precisely the explanation of Ristoro. See B. VI. c. 7 (p. 84): '*a cagione della generazione è cessata e ammolata l' una acqua sopra la terra*': and similarly in other passages.

[A specimen chapter of the work of Arezzo is printed *infra*, pp. 371-372.]

I venture now with some confidence to affirm that the author of the *Quaestio* was acquainted with the treatise of Ristoro d'Arezzo. Apart from minor points of resemblance, it is important to observe that (as far as I can trace) this is the *only* source from which the writer could have derived the singular and central feature of his theory, viz. the 'virtus elevans' of the Northern stars and constellations. While this is very prominent in Ristoro¹, it is not to be found in any of the other writers to whom I have so often referred². In particular, it is absent in Albertus Magnus³, who, while recognizing the influence of the stars in this relation, (1) has no notion of a 'virtus elevans' but of a 'virtus exsiccans' (*supra*, p. 364 n.); and (2), so far from believing in any superior virtue for the stars of the Northern hemisphere, argues for the habitability of the Southern hemisphere because the stars would naturally have produced the same effects there as here (*ibid.*). It will surely not be suggested that so singular and unique a speculation should have occurred to two writers quite independently. If then the author of the *Quaestio* made use of the work of Ristoro, we have another very strong argument that he was none other than Dante himself, for the reasons explained in the text, *supra*, p. 354.

III. I now proceed to show that the problem of the *Quaestio* was still an open one and full of interest in the time of Dante, and therefore likely to have occupied his attention.

In the first place let us note this. The system of Cosmogony universally accepted in those days was that the ten Heavens and the four elemental spheres lay concentrically and successively one above the other, with no vacuum between, so that the 'gibbosity' of one filled the 'concavity' of the next, as Ristoro expresses it⁴. This will be found also in Alfraganus, in Albertus Magnus⁵, in Joannes de Sacrobosco, in Brunetto

¹ It will be remembered that Ristoro holds that the elevating influence was exercised on the Water, not on the Land (*supra*, p. 365).

² Another such case was noted *supra*, p. 362.

³ How very much Dante was indebted to Albertus Magnus in matters of Astronomy and Physics generally, may be seen by a reference to Mr. Toynbee's Dictionary, s. v. 'Alberto di Colonia.'

⁴ E.g. B. III. c. 5 (p. 62), c. 7 (p. 66), and elsewhere.

⁵ *Phys. B. IV. Tr. I. c. xi. (ii. p. 157)*; *De Nat. Loc. Tr. I. c. iii. (v. p. 265)*; and many other places. In *De Prop. Elem. Tr. II. c. i. (v. p. 299)* the question is

Latini, and in Roger Bacon. Consequently the problem discussed in the *Quaestio* presented a serious difficulty, and one which pressed for solution. For, if by the Laws of Nature the sphere of Water is above that of Earth, how is the anomaly of the 'dry land,' or 'terra detecta,' to be explained¹?

In the next place it will be seen that the view here advocated was by no means the one generally admitted. Indeed quite the reverse was the case.

(1) Dante's so-called 'master,' Brunetto Latini, held the view which is repudiated in the *Quaestio*, and, like Ristoro, employs it to explain the appearance of springs high up upon the mountains. See *Trésor* I. part iii. c. 106 (p. 115). He accounts for this by the supposition that the earth is permeated by channels through which the water runs like blood in the veins of the body, and as water always finds its own level, and *the sea is higher than the land*, the phenomenon is satisfactorily explained. 'Et il est voirs que la mers siet sor la terre, selonc ce que li contes a devisé ça en arriere au chapitre des Elemens (viz. c. 105, p. 112), donc est ele plus haute que la terre; et se la mers est plus haute, donc n'est il mie merveille des fontaines qui sordent sor les hautismes montaignes, car il est propre nature des aigues que eles montent tant comme eles avalent.' I have quoted this at length because Brunetto clearly maintains not only that the 'element' Water has its 'proprio loco' above the 'element' Earth, but that the sea itself is above the land.

(2) Again, Ristoro d'Arezzo, B. VI. c. 7 (pp. 84, 85), offers two alternative explanations of the same phenomenon. One in effect corresponds with that given above:—'Può bene salire l'acqua nel monte secondo questa via, . . . con ciò sia cosa che l'acqua sia sperica e per ragione debbia coprire tutta la terra intorno intorno, secondo questa via *sarà più alta l'acqua della terra.*' Then, after explaining that one-fourth of the land is not covered with water, this being due to the water being 'cessata e ammollata' sopra la terra a cagione

discussed whether the friction of these contiguous spheres produces sound: so also in Ristoro, B. VIII. c. 19.

¹ It is curious to see how Albertus Magnus struggles with the difficulty in *Meteor.* II. Tr. III. c. ii. (ii. p. 55), though he does not state the precise question propounded in the *Quaestio*.

² The word *ammollata*, which is used several times by Arezzo, seems to have 'cessata' as a synonym. I can find no trace of any such meaning in the *Gram. Dis.* or in the New Crusca Dictionary, or elsewhere, but the writer must, I suppose, be allowed to interpret his own phraseology, and that meaning seems to suit all the places where the word occurs. The Vocabolario 'Tramater' gives 'desinere,' 'cessare,' as meanings of 'mollare.'

della generazione¹, he proceeds:—‘E la terra ragionevolmente de’ stare di sotto dell’ acqua, imperciò ch’ ella è più grave; e l’ acqua dee stare di sopra, e *maggiormente più suso*, imperciò ch’ ella è ammollata l’ una sopra l’ altra . . . e l’ acqua che è mollata, la qual tiene le tre parti della terra, *è più alta che la terra*; grava la parte di sopra quella di sotto e imprieme inverso la terra; truova la terra spugnosa per la virtude del cielo e forata. . . . E l’ acqua, che passa entro per li pertugi della terra, quando viene di salire al monte, di sè non può, ma il grande peso dell’ acqua ammollata, *la qual è più alta della terra e del monte*, prieme e caccia l’ una acqua l’ altra entro per li pertugi e forati, e per forza la fa andare a sommo il monte.’

Note especially here the sort of *a fortiori* argument introduced by ‘*maggiormente*,’ &c. He regards the water as rolled back from the dry land and *piled up* consequently to a greater height than the water would otherwise have had, and the increased pressure resulting forces the lower stratum of the water up through the earth to the tops of the highest mountains, which after all are themselves below the level of the ‘sphere’ of the element water. Ristoro therefore most clearly holds the view which is impugned in the *Quaestio*. The other suggestion made by Ristoro in explanation of the phenomenon is as follows:—‘. . . che la virtù del ciel . . . tragga l’ acqua su nella terra e specialmente a sommo i monti, come *la virtude della calamita trae a sè il ferro* . . . adunque la sua virtude trarrà l’ acqua a sommo i monti *come la calamita lo ferro*.’ (Cf. *Quaestio*, § xxi. l. 43.)

(3) Then again in the Commentary known as that of the *Anonimo Fiorentino* (early in the fifteenth century), upon *Inf.* xxxiv. 76 *seqq.* we read:—‘Che l’ acqua sia sopra la terra appare chiaro, però che sopra a qualunque montagna è più alta vi si truova acqua, e *se ’l mare non fosse più alto che la terra*, vi mancherebbe e non vi si troverebbe acqua.’

(4) Moreover, even S. Thomas Aquinas held the same opinion. In *Summa* i. Q. 69, Art. 1, § 2, commenting on the meaning of the words ‘Let the dry land appear,’ he mentions three explanations, himself preferring the following: ‘ut aquae in maiorem altitudinem sint elevatae in loco ubi sunt congregatae. Nam *mare est altius terra*, ut experimento compertum est in mari rubro.’

(5) I am indebted to Mr. Toynbee for the following additional evidence that the question was still ‘open.’

¹ Comp. *Quaestio*, § xviii. ll. 43-54.

'Il Libro di Sidrach (c. 1250), ed. Bartoli; Bologna, 1868. Cap. ccxxxvii. (p. 272):—

'Lo re domanda: quale è più alto o la terra o lo mare? Sidrac risponde: "La terra è assai più alta che l'mare. Se il mare fosse più alto che la terra, ella (*sic*) coprirebbe la terra. Questo potete voi vedere apertamente: pigliate uno vasello, e enpietelo pieno d' acqua, raso col vasello, cioè coll' orlo, e l' acqua si terrà senza ispandere, se il vasello non si tocca; e se voi mettete anche uno poco d' acqua, ella saglierà d' ogni parte, e spande sopra l' orlo del vasello. Altressi averrebbe se lo mare fosse più alto che la terra, lo mare ispanderebbe da tutte parti e coprirebbe la terra."

'Il Libro di Novelle et di Bel Parlare Gientile (c. 1285), ed. Biagi; Firenze, 1880. cv. (p. 103):—

'Qual è più alto tra lo mare o la terra?—"La terra si è più alta assai che llo mare; chè lla più bassa ripa del mondo è più alta che l' mare. Et se llo mare fosse più alto che lla terra, elli la coprirebbe tutta d' acqua d' ongni parte."

The general conclusion would seem to be:—

1. That not only was Dante himself likely to be acquainted with the work of Ristoro, but there appears to be definite evidence that he was so.
2. That the author of the *Quaestio* (whether Dante or anyone else) probably derived from Ristoro the central and most conspicuous feature of his treatise, viz. the theory by which he accounts for the apparent anomaly of the land being higher than the water through the influence of the stars of the Northern hemisphere.
3. That while this theory is very prominent in Ristoro it is not to be found (as far as I am aware) in any of the other writers whom Dante is likely to have consulted, certainly not (as far as I can ascertain) in Alfraganus, B. Latini, Albertus Magnus, Sacrobosco, &c.
4. That Ristoro, though easily accessible to Dante, was not likely to have been even known or heard of by a forger of later date.
5. That the subject treated in the *Quaestio* was one of lively interest and still a matter of common discussion in Dante's time, and, in fact, 'indeterminata restabat' (*Q.* § i.). It was therefore likely to have occupied his attention. Hence too the need for such an elaborate and earnest refutation.

RISTORO D'AREZZO,

Composizione del Mondo, B. VI. c. 1.

I THINK it worth while to reproduce a characteristic chapter of Arezzo, that my readers may judge of his general style and tone, and see how akin they are to the level of thought implied in the *Quaestio*; especially as his work may not be generally accessible:—

‘Poi che noi avemo mosso e volto il cielo, ed assegnata la cagione perch’ egli si volge in quella parte là ov’ egli va, anche avemo assegnata la cagione perchè i pianeti si muovono d’ occidente ad oriente : e veggiamo che l’ operazione del cielo non può essere la generazione, se la terra non è scoperta dell’ acqua¹. Con ciò sia cosa che l’ acqua sia spherica, per ragione dee coprire tutta la terra igualmente intorno intorno.

‘E veggiamo sotto qual parte del cielo la terra possa essere scoperta, e qual parte del cielo la possa scoprire, per mantenere scoperta, per adoperarvi suso; s’ ella può essere scoperta dalla parte di settentrione, o da quella del mezzo die.

‘E per ragione dee essere scoperta dalla parte più forte del cielo e più piena di virtude, come quella ch’ è settentrione; chè noi veggiamo la parte di settentrione essere fortificata e piena di figure, e spessa e soffolta di grandissima moltitudine di stelle; e la parte del mezzo die veggiamo rada e debole, di poche figure e di poche stelle, a quello rispetto; e ’n quella parte spessa, là ove sono le molte figure e grandissima moltitudine di stelle, quella parte dee essere forte, e quivi dee essere per ragione molta virtude, e molta potenza e molta operazione; e in quella parte rada, e di poche figure e di poche stelle, a quello rispetto, quella parte de’ essere debile in operazione, a quello rispetto, e avere meno operazione e meno virtude. Adunque troviamo la parte di settentrione più forte e più potente per adoperare nella terra di quella del mezzo die; e possiamo chiamare per ragione parte dritta, imperciò ch’ ella è più forte; e potemola chiamare per ragione parte di sopra, acciò che li animali del zodiaco tengono rivolto il capo nella parte di sopra in quella parte; e la parte di mezzo die potemo chiamare per ragione parte manca, imperciò ch’ ella è più rada e più debole, di poche figure e di poche stelle; e potemola chiamare per ragione parte di sotto, acciò che li animali del zodiaco tegnono rivolti li piedi in quella parte. Adunque è mistieri per forza di ragione che la terra sia scoperta dell’ acqua nella parte diritta del cielo, la quale è più spessa, e più forte e più potente: la qual potemo chiamare per ragione parte di sopra, come quella di settentrione, la quale è piena di figure e di grandissima moltitudine di stelle.

¹ Cf. *Q.* § xviii. ll. 50-54.

‘E se 'l cielo dee adoperare sopra la terra, secondo che pognono i savi, questa parte spessa del cielo per ragione dee essere piena di virtude e di potenza, di potere scoprire la terra dell' acqua e per mantenerla scoperta, per adoperarvisi maggiormente. Chè la calamita de' sostenere e de' trarre a sè il ferro, e se la calamita non avesse virtude di trarre a sè e di sostenere lo ferro; e lo ferro non sarebbe tratto e non andrebbe ad essa; e se lo cielo non avesse virtù di scoprire la terra e di mantenerla iscoperta, lo cielo non potrebbe adoperare ivi su la sua operazione, e la generazione non sarebbe, e sarebbe guasto il mondo. E se 'l cielo ha virtude per fare operazione sopra la terra, è mestieri ch' egli abbia virtude per cessare via l' acqua e di mantenere la terra scoperta, e specialmente inverso la parte più forte del cielo, come quella di settentrione. E i savi s' accordano tutti, che i corpi di sopra abbiano signoria e potenza sopra quelli di sotto: e tutta la virtude de' corpi di sotto si mantiene dai corpi celestiali.’

NOTE ON THE WORD '*Auge*.'

THIS word, which is in sense equivalent to 'apogee,' is common in all mediaeval works relating to astronomy. In these perigee is generally described as 'oppositum augis,' as in Ristoro, Roger Bacon, &c., though also (as sometimes in Ristoro) by another Arabic word transliterated as *seunsaar*, or *geusaar*. The resemblance of the words 'auge' and 'apogee' seems to be accidental, and this term was derived not from Greek but Arabian astronomers. *Auj* is the technical word in Arabic for 'apsis summa stellarum,' and is also metaphorically used for any summit¹. As an astronomical term it is said (like some others) to come from a Persian word, viz. *auk*. In Latin it is transliterated generally by *auge*, *augis*, but Roger Bacon has *aux* as the nominative². The same word is used in Italian in geometry for the highest point of a curve; and then metaphorically for the highest point, acme, climax, or perfection of anything, e.g. 'l'auge della felicità, della gloria, della perfezione.' It is found in the same sense in Spanish and Portuguese. In English also, besides its use as a technical astronomical term, Murray's Dictionary gives some examples (seventeenth century) of its metaphorical use, e.g. 'They were in the auge or zenith of their first love.' 'Apogee' itself is found (*op. cit.*) with a similar metaphorical meaning in Old English, and even so recent a writer as Motley writes: 'The trade of the Netherlands had by no means reached its apogee.' It seemed difficult at first to connect the ideas of climax, perfection, &c., with that of 'apogee.' But it is clearly the result of the Ptolemaic conception that the centre of the Earth was the centre of the Universe, and so its lowest point, and therefore the greater the distance of anything from the Earth the higher it would be³. The following are some passages illustrating this. *Quaestio*, § xv. l. 13: 'Quum omne remotius a centro mundi sit altius,' &c.⁴ Ristoro, l. c. 20: 'da qualun-

¹ I owe this information to Professor Margoliouth.

² E.g. *Op. Maj.* i. p. 137. So also in one of the Latin translations of Alfraganus, viz. Ed. 1590.

³ The surviving nomenclature of the 'inferior' and 'superior' planets is another familiar example of this.

⁴ Cf. *Quaestio*, § iii. l. 9; xii. l. 24.

que parte noi ne movemo da questo punto [viz. il centro della terra] andiamo verso il cielo e *alla insù*¹; *ib.* c. 12: 'vediamo una volta il pianeto esser *alto, di lungi alla terra*, . . . e un'altra volta lo vedemo *basso, appressato alla terra*; e quella parte del cerchio ch'è più *levata* dalla terra, ch'è chiamata *auge*, &c.; so in other passages. So Sacrobosco *de Sphaera*, I. 8: 'quidquid a medio movetur versus circumferentiam coeli *ascendit*.' (Hence he argues the immobility of the Earth, because, if it moved at all, it must *ascend*, which is impossible.) See also passages from the *Trésor* of B. Latini and from Benvenuto, *supra*, pp. 321, 322.

The 'auge' of the Moon seems to have been confused by some writers with her 'Opposition' to the Sun. Thus Roger Bacon, *Op. Maj.* part iv. (i. p. 232): 'Sed Ptolemaeus consideravit quod diameter Lunae non aequatur secundum aspectum diametro Solis, nisi quando Luna est in longitudine suâ maxima. Et hoc est quando Luna est in auge epicycli, et epicyclus in auge eccentrici, et *hoc est iterum quando est plena*.' Dr. Schmidt (to whom I owe the last citation) also quotes Delambre, *Hist. Astron. Anc.*, as follows: 'Le diamètre de la lune lui (*sc.* Ptolémée) parut le même que celui du soleil, lorsque dans les oppositions elle est à l'apogée de son épicycle.'

¹ Dante recognizes this in *Inf.* xxxiv. 79 *seqq.*, when he says that after he and Virgil had passed the centre of the Earth, though continuing in the same direction, he found himself *ascending*,

'Sì che in inferno io credea tornar anche.'

Similarly Plato in the *Phaedo*, describing the manner in which rivers have their source in the great chasm of Tartarus which pierces through the whole earth, and flow back into it again (112 A, B), declares that they cannot pass beyond the centre, 'δυνατόν δ' ἔστιν ἐκατέρωσε μέχρι τοῦ μέσου καθίεναι, πέρα δ' οὐ. πάντες γὰρ ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς βέυσμασι τὸ ἐκατέρωθεν γίγνεται μέρος' (112 E).

ADDITIONAL *CORRIGENDA* TO THE FIRST SERIES OF *STUDIES*

- Page 18, l. 4 from top, *for* 'Francis' *read* 'Dominic'
- „ 21, first line of note, *for* 'gognosco' *read* 'cognosco'
- „ 29, l. 4 from bottom of text, *for* 'matter' *read* 'manner'
- „ 40, l. 9 from bottom of text, *for* 'such' *read* 'this'
- „ 43, l. 13 from top, *for* 'ob ora.' *read* 'ab ora.'
- „ 99, last line but one, *for* 'on' *read* 'in'
- „ 118, l. 2 from top, *for* 'ἄλλο' *read* 'ἄλλο'
- „ 126, l. 26 from top, *for* '3600' *read* '36000'
- „ 145, l. 20 from top, *for* 'ἐθισμένον' *read* 'εἰθισμένον'
- „ 167, l. 19 from top, *dele* the parenthesis '(Mon. III. iii.)'
- „ 169, l. 2 from top, *for* 'seem' *read* 'seems'
- „ 174, l. 8 from bottom (text), *for* 'probable' *read* 'possible'
- „ 219, l. 17 from top, *for* 'MSS. since brought to light' *read* 'an ingenious conjecture'
- „ 221, l. 23 from top, *for* 'included' *read* 'intruded'
- „ 231, l. 22 from top, *for* 'sridore' *read* 'stridore'
- „ 238, last line, *for* 'userpentello' *read* 'un serpentello'
- „ 267, l. 4 from bottom (text), *insert after* 'reading' *the words* 'in *Purg.* ix. 17'
- „ 285, l. 15 from top, *dele* ' ? '
- „ 301, l. 18 from top, *for* 'ἀντιπεριστῇ' *read* 'ἀντιπεριστῇ'

ADDENDA TO THE FIRST SERIES OF STUDIES

THE following more or less probable references to Scripture or classical authors may be added:—

c.	<i>Inf.</i> v. 20	Matt. vii. 13.
c.	— v. 36	Rev. xvi. 9, 10.
b.	— xxvii. 78	Ps. xviii. 5.
c.	— xxix. 2	Is. xvi. 9.
b.	<i>Purg.</i> i. 34-36 ¹	Lucan, <i>Phars.</i> ii. 372-376.
c.	— vi. 66	Gen. xlix. 9.
b.	— vi. 121-123	Ecclus. xxiv. 39.
b.	— xvi. 18.	John i. 29.
c.	— xvi. 53, 54	Job xxxii. 18-20.
b.	— xxii. 10-12, 16, 17.	Cic. de <i>Amic.</i> viii. 28 <i>iml.</i>
b.	— xxii. 88	Stat. <i>Theb.</i> ix. 225 <i>segg.</i>
b.	— xxii. 154	Matt. xi. 11 (or Luke vii. 28).
b.	— xxviii. 121-126.	Gen. ii. 5, 6.
c.	<i>Par.</i> xix. 39 (cf. 98)	Rev. xiv. 3.
c.	— xix. 85	Boeth. <i>Cons. Phil.</i> III. Pros. iii. <i>iml.</i>
b.	<i>Conv.</i> I. xii. ll. 75 <i>segg.</i> ²	Cic. de <i>Off.</i> II. xi. 40.
c.	— III. vi. ll. 95-98	Ar. <i>Nic. Eth.</i> X. viii. 13.
a.	— IV. xi. l. 83 ³	Ar. <i>Magn. Mor.</i> II. viii. (1207 a 5).
b.	<i>De Vulg. Elog.</i> I. vi. ll. 17, 18.	Ovid. <i>Fasti</i> I. 493.
b.	<i>Epist.</i> viii. 11, l. 181	Heb. xi. 13.

¹ Some of the details here seem certainly to have been suggested by Lucan's description of Cato's grim appearance on his second wedding day ('second' in the sense explained by *Conv.* IV. xxviii. 133 *segg.*). One feels that the words 'duroque admisit gaudia vultu' might apply to Dante himself! (See *Purg.* iv. 122; *Conv.* III. viii. 100 *segg.*)

² See *Studies*, I. p. 103. This sentiment is wrongly attributed by Dante to Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* B. V. I suggested that it was familiar to Dante from some other source, but that he assumed it to come from *Ethics*, B. V. as a likely place. The passage in Cicero runs thus: 'Cuius (*sc.* justitiæ) tanta vis est, ut ne illi quidem qui maleficio et scelere pascuntur possint sine ulla particulâ justitiæ vivere . . . Quin etiam leges latronum esse dicuntur, quibus pareant, quas observent,' &c. (I have to thank Mr. Toynbee for this identification of the true source of the quotation.)

³ See *Studies*, I. p. 153, where I wrongly suspected this quotation of being 'apocryphal,' not having then been able to find it. Aristotle's words are: 'Διὸ καὶ οὐ πλείστον νοῦς καὶ λόγος, ἐνταῦθα ἐλαχίστη τύχη, οὐ δὲ πλείστη τύχη, ἐνταῦθ' ἐλαχίστος νοῦς.'

I TAKE this opportunity of adding a few more miscellaneous notes and illustrations that have occurred to me.

p. 6. Another list of 'great poets' may be added to those in the note. Lord Tennyson once said that, though he had no great liking for arranging the poets in a hierarchy, yet he thought that Homer, Æschylus, Sophocles, Virgil, Dante, Shakspeare, and Goethe—these seven—'were the greatest of the great, so far.' (This arrangement is evidently chronological, and not 'in order of merit.')

p. 21. Another case in which Dante has combined (or confused) two Scriptural incidents occurs in his account of the restitution of the Ark in *Purg.* x. 55 *seqq.* The incidents of the two stages of its return, three months apart, are depicted together in the sculptured imagery of the wall of rock. It may be added that Dante evidently followed ii. Samuel, where the two narratives are in juxtaposition. They are separated by two chapters in i. Chronicles.

p. 48. The sense given to *rovinano* may be illustrated by Tennyson's line:—
'Ruining along the illimitable inane.'

p. 73. (Nimrod as the builder of Babel.) Add Orosius II. vi. 7: 'Babylonem a Nembrot gigante fundatum.' Also in an Early English Poem, c. 1250 (*Early English Text Society*, 1865; p. 659), we read: 'Nembrot. . . hadde of water dred,' &c.

p. 81. Another and a very homely description of the 'Vigliacchi' may be added from Lowell, Biglow Papers, No. vi. *ad fin.*:

'Folk thets afeerd to fail, are sure o' failing;
God hates your sneekin' creturs that believe
He'll settle things they run away and leave.'

p. 86, l. 8. The wording of this is misleading, as it appears as if Prudenzeno were the author of the Life of S. Francis quoted. I meant that Michele da Carbonara makes this statement on the *authority* of Prudenzeno.

p. 91. Mr. Wicksteed suggests that 'atti villani' may refer to insulting gestures, such as 'detrahentia labia.' If so, comp. *Inf.* xvii. 74, 75.

p. 96. In the *Antiqua Translatio* the words are: 'vere bonus et tetragonus sine vituperio.'

p. 111. I have since found 'Universal and Particular Nature' in Aquinas, *Summa* i. Q. 22, Art. 2, Concl. § 2 (*v. supra*, p. 333).

p. 116. In further illustration of *Par.* xxiv. 130-132, add Boeth. *de Cons. Phil.* III. Met. 9, l. 3:

'Stabilisque manens das cuncta moveri.'

p. 130. With the expression 'ἐκθλαψιν' in the passage quoted from Arist. *Meteor.* compare Lucan, *Phars.* I. 151, 152:—

'Qualiter *expressum ventis* per nubila fulmen
Ætheris impulsu sonitu' &c.

p. 133. On the relation supposed by Aristotle to exist between lightning and thunder, see further *Meteor.* II. ix. (369 a 28 - b 9), and *De Mundo*, c. iv. (395 a 11-21).

p. 134. It may be noted that the language of Aristotle in *Meteor.* 350 *a* 2 *seqq.* may perhaps be quoted in favour of the interpretation of 'lofty' rather than 'deep' for '*alta vena*' in *Par.* xii. 99.

p. 198. Mr. Toynbee has pointed out that Dante probably owed to Uguccone his knowledge of the quotation apparently made from Hor. *Ep.* I. xiv. 43: '*bovem ephippiatum.*' Also that many of his etymologies (besides that acknowledged in *Conv.* IV. vi.) come from this source: *inter alia* that implied for 'hypocrite.' See *Studies* I. p. 306 n.

p. 230. In reference to Julius Caesar as a typical example against 'Accidia,' it may be noted how very frequently Caesar himself attributes his success to his promptness and rapidity in action. See *inter alia* *B. C. I.* c. 36, 37, 70, &c.

p. 241. The interpretation of *pregno* in *Purg.* xiv. 31 as referring to the *form* of the Apennines is sometimes taken to indicate not the *height* (as in the text) but the *lateral swelling-out* of the chain, from which many secondary groups of hills derive their origin. It thus forms, in the spot described by Dante, an important 'orographical' centre. If the sense 'prolific' be preferred, it may be added that the locality indicated by Dante is approximately the birthplace of the Tiber as well as of the Arno. On this see G. Villani, *Cron.* I. c. 43, where several striking points of resemblance will also be found with Dante's description *h. l.* of the course of the Arno.

p. 252. The 'pairing' of Lucifer and Briareus, which I have pointed out in the note, is emphasized by Dante in the words '*da un lato*' (l. 27) and '*dall'altra parte*' (l. 29).

p. 257. Another reproduction of the well-known sentiment of Juvenal is found in Chaucer, *Wyf of Bath's Tale*, l. 1192 (*al.* 336), p. 580:—

'Juvenal seith of povert merily:

"The povre man, whan he goth by the weye,
Bifore the theves he may singe and pleye."

p. 284. Lucan also supposes the Euphrates and Tigris to have a common source. See *Phars.* III. 256-259:—

'Quaque caput rapido tollit cum Tigride magnus
Euphrates, quos non diversis fontibus edit
Persis.'

p. 289. Dante's quotation of Seneca in *Conv.* I. viii. 121 *seqq.* appears to have been taken from Aquinas, *Summa* ii. 2^{dæ} Q. 83, Art. 2.

p. 293. S. Augustine repeats the metaphor of *Conf.* IV. xvi. in *Serm. ad Catechum.* (vol. vi. p. 969 C): '*O Judaei, ad hoc ferentes in manibus lucernam Legis, ut aliis viam demonstretis, et vobis tenebras ingeratis.*'

p. 300. On the distinction between *aer* and *aether* see also Plato, *Phaedo*, 111 A.

p. 301. Add Lucan, *Phars.* iv. 51:—

'*Æthere constricto pluvias in nube tenebat.*'

INDEX



- Accidia* (or *Acedia*), the term explained, 183, 184.
 — distinguished from *Tristitia*, 184, 185.
 — whether punished in *Inferno*, 163 *seqq.*, 173-176.
 — its position in *Purgatorio*, 195, 208.
 — no Church office in *Cornice* of, 53 n, 261, 262.
 ' *Accidioso*, ' 174, 175, 184.
Adelasia, wife of Enzo, 282 n.
Aeschylus, 214.
Agathon, 122, 133.
Alberigo, Frate, 241, 258 n.
Alberto Tedesco, 33, 34.
Albertus Magnus, 333, 358, 362, 363, 367, 370.
 — *De Coslo et Mundo*, 335 n.
 — *Meteor.*, 347 n, 368 n.
 — *De Nat. Locorum*, 322 n, 345 n, 347 n, 364 n, 366 n, 367 n.
 — *De Prop. Elem.*, 319, 367 n.
 — *Phys.*, 367 n.
Alcuin, 189.
Aldhelm, S., 188.
Alfonso, king of Aragon, 297.
Alfraganus, *Elementa Astronomica*, 123, 323, 324, 339, 358, 359, 362, 367, 370, 373 n.
Alighieri, great-grandfather of Dante, 49, 78 n.
Allegorical interpretations, 35, 132-135.
Allen, Dr. A. V. G., quoted, 46 n.
Angeli mouitori, 334, 360.
Angels, Fall of, 244.
Angels, Creation of, 334.
Angelus, The, 64.
Anonimo Fiorentino, Commentary of, 369.
Ante-Purgatory, an invention of Dante, 59.
 — is sin possible in, 60.
Ante-Purgatory, four divisions of, 247.
Apogee, 340, 373.
Aquinas, S. Thomas :
 — Indulgences, 46 n.
 — Penance, 47.
 — *Purificatio* and *Satisfactio*, 44 n, 48, 49 n.
 — Purgatorial pains, 51 n.
 — Sin in Purgatory impossible, 58, 60 n.
 — Prayers for, or by, those in Purgatory, 53, 55.
 — *Voluntas conditionata*, 50.
 — Salvation of Trajan, 39, 254.
 — — of heathen and O. T. Saints, 40-42.
 — Limbo, 38.
 — Immaculate Conception of B. M. V., 64.
 — Prescience of disembodied spirits, 171 n.
 — References bearing on Seven Deadly Sins, 164, 165, 177 n, 195, 206-208, 268.
 — References bearing on *Quaestio*, 319, 323 n, 333, 351, 369.
 — Miscellaneous references, 99 n, 157, 181, 191, 204-208, 259, 377, 378.
 — his alleged d. ath by poison, 283.
Arabia, *ver. lect.* in *V. N.* § xx., 123.
Aresio, L., 171 n, 172 n.
Aristotle, 330, 332, 350-352.
 — *Categ.*, 352.
 — *De Coslo*, 321, 323, 331.
 — *De Mundo*, 377.
 — *Magn. Mor.*, 376 n.
 — *Metaph.*, 352.
 — *Meteor.*, 325, 342, 348, 351, 353, 377, 378.
 — *Nic. Eth.*, 50 n, 159 n, 161 n, 175, 204 n, 205, 211, 212, 213, 214, 219 n, 220, 336 n, 352.
 — *Phys.*, 352.

- Aristotle, *Poetics*, 3 n, 83, 104, 105, 133, 212 n, 213, 226, 230, 236, 258.
 — *Politics*, 19, 223 n.
 — *Prior Anal.*, 352.
 — *Rhetoric*, 212, 213 n.
 Arnold, Matthew, 133 n, 144 n.
 Aroux, 8, 95, 106, 107 n, 139 n.
 Ashburnham MSS., 130, 150.
 Auge, 340, 373, 374.
 Augustine, S., 34, 36, 48, 113, 183, 189, 193, 285 n.
 — *De Gen. ad Lit.*, 356 n.
 — *Quaest. in Lev.*, 40 n.
 — *Enarr. in Ps.*, 44 n, 220 n.
 — *Conf.*, 378.
 — *De Civ. Dei*, 22 n, 44 n, 58 n, 206 n.
 — *De Catech. Rud.*, 145 n.
 — *Serm.*, 205 n.
 — *Serm. ad Catechum.*, 378.
 — *Epist.*, 205 n, 259 n.
 — *Retract.*, 109 n.
 Avarice, Dante's treatment of, 75, 76, 173, 218, 224.
 Averroes, 335, 347, 351, 362, 363, 364.
 Avignon, Papacy at, 36, 100, 248.
 Asso VIII, Marchese, of Este, 292.
 Bacon, Roger, *Opus Majus*, 323 n, 340 n, 362, 368, 373, 374.
 Balbo, *Vita di Dante*, 97 n, 163.
 Balsani, *Popes and the Hohenstaufen*, 276 n, 288 n.
 Baptistry of Florence, 229.
 Baratteria, 182, 231, 234.
 'Barbara, Celarent, &c.', 30.
 Barbarossa (Emp. Frederic I), 274 n, 275, 276, 279, 286.
 Barberino, Francesco da, 117 n, 118 n.
 Bartoli, Professor A., 83, 84 n, 116, 126, 127, 144 n, 151, 167, 170 n, 176, 306.
 Beatrice, date of her death, 114, 123.
 — her father, 98.
 — her brothers and sisters, 98, 104, 114.
 — her reproaches of Dante, 105.
 — her last words in the *Paradiso*, 27 n.
 — her symbolism in the *Div. Com.*, 61, 141.
 — real, ideal, and symbolical theories respecting, 81 *seqq.*
 — her influence on Dante, 118.
 — the name *Bice*, 98 n, 141.
 Beatrice, d. of K. Charles II, 292, 298 n.
 Beatrice, d. of Raymond Berenger, 287 n, 295.
 Bede, Penitentiary, 57 n.
 Bellarmine, Cardinal, his defence of Dante, 6.
 Benedict, S., 27 n.
 Benevento, battle of, 284.
 Benevieni, 166.
 Benvenuto da Imola, *Comento* quoted, 76 n, 86 n, 167 n, 232 n, 259 n, 322 n, 374.
 Bernard de Ventadour, 363.
 Bernard, S., 42, 62, 63, 65 n, 67, 191, 204, 244.
 — *De Consideratione*, 13 n, 18 n, 193.
 — *Epistolae*, 182.
 — *Sermones*, 62 n, 75 n.
 Berthier, R. P., 129 n.
 Biagioli, 326 n.
 Bianca Lancina, 282.
 Biscioni, 87.
 Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante*, 17 n, 85, 108, 119 n, 130, 150, 151, 169 n.
 — *Comento (or Lectures)*, 31, 99, 119 n, 130, 131, 161 n, 169 n, 176 n, 199 n, 276 n.
 — *Decameron*, 92 n.
 — his sources of information about Dante, 169 n.
 — on missing Cantos of *Paradiso*, 308 n.
 Boehmer, emendations to text of *Quaestio*, 305 n.
 Boethius, death of, 281.
 — quoted, 377.
 Boissard, 8.
 Bonaventura, S., 63, 65, 67, 75 n, 191, 194, 258, 259.
 Blanco, *Versuch*, &c., 161 n.
 Branca d'Oria, 241, 282 n.
 Briareus, 378.
 Bridlington, John de, 203.
 Browning, R., quoted, 59, 166, 243.
 Bunyan, 112 n, 133.
 Buonconte, death of, 11 n, 285 n, 290.
 Buti, *Comento*, quoted, 86 n.
 Butler, A. J., quoted, 7 n, 266 n.
 Cacciaguida, 54 n.
 Caesar, Julius, 378.
 Caird, Professor (Master of Balliol), 7 n, 148.
 Capet, Hugh, 256, 289.
 Capocci, Giovanni, 71 n.
 Carducci, 129, 134.
 Carlo, Martello, Dante's one personal friend in Paradise, 219 n, 287.
 Carlyle, T., quoted, 51.
 Carpenter, G. R., on *Donna Pistoia*, 105 n, 115, 117 n, 135 n.
 Carpentras, Conclave at, 101.
 Casella, 67.
 Cassian, 184-186, 204.

- Castravilla, 3 n.
Catechismus ad Parochos, 101.
 Catharine, S. (of Genoa), 51.
 Cato, 134, 221 n, 376 n.
 Cecco d'Ascoli, 2 n.
 Cefalù, 274, 291.
 Centofante, quoted, 125.
 Charles the Great, his coronation, 17.
 Charles of Anjou, 228, 283, 287 n, 288-292, 295, 296.
 Charles II, 'il Ciotto,' 274, 275 n, 282, 287, 288, 291-295, 297-299.
 Chaucer, 47, 62 n, 187, 199, 292 n, 378.
 Chesterfield, Lord, on Dante, 3.
 Ciaccio, his 'prophecies,' 169-172.
 Cicero, Dante's classification of Sins partly due to, 157 *seqq.*
 — MSS. of his Letters, &c., 314, 315.
 — Greek words in, 184 n.
 — *De Officiis*, 158, 376 n.
 — *De Senectute*, 266.
 Cino da Pistoia, 2 n, 117, 125, 140.
 Clement of Alexandria, 24.
 Coleridge, quoted, 76 n, 238 n, 244.
 Colonna, Egidio, *De Regimine Principum*, 31 n.
 — *De Renunciacione Papae*, 31.
 — *Tractatus de formatione*, &c., 310.
Complessione and *complezionata*, 305, 335, 336, 337.
 Comte, Auguste, 8, 126 n.
 Confiteor, The, 260.
 Conrad IV (Emperor), 282, 283, 286, 289 n.
 Conradin, 283, 286, 289 n, 290.
 Constance¹, d. of King Roger, 269, 274-277, 284 n, 285, 301, 302.
 Constance² of Aragon, wife of Emp. Frederic II, 285, 301, 302.
 Constance³, d. of Manfred, 271, 285, 296.
 Constantine, Donation of, 13 n, 15, 16.
 — character of, 294.
Convito, Dante's original design for, 267.
 Councils, authority of, 36.
 'Courts of Love,' 119.
 Crabbe, quoted, 102.
 Creighton, Bp., quoted, 65 n, 68 n, 69 n, 74 n.
 Cross, J. W., 8 n.
 Damian, S. Peter, 17 n, 27 n, 56, 67, 191, 192.
 D'Ancona, 92, 97 n, 107, 116, 129, 130, 133 n, 140 n, 145, 146 n, 149.
 Dante, described as 'Catholic Virgil' or 'poetic Aquinas,' 6.
 — 'prophecy' attributed to him, 6 n, 7, 318 n.
 Dante, lived under fourteen Popes, 27.
 — his besetting sins, 59 n.
 — his contempt for Avarice, 75, 76, 218, 224.
 — his admiration for Humility, 75, 328.
 — his sister's marriage, 99.
 — his allegorization of historical persons and events, 134 *seqq.*
 — his mention of the name of Beatrice to Forese Donati, 140 n.
 — resembles a Hebrew prophet, 34, 243.
 — dates of publication of his several works, 309.
 — Epistle to Can Grande, 193, 267 n, 352 n.
 — absurd scepticism respecting his Epistles, 267, 327 n, 352 n.
 — his devotion to Truth, 229, 330.
 — his contempt for women, 338.
 — his strong belief in influence of Stars, 341, 344.
 — his knowledge of contemporary literature, 363.
 Da Prato, Cardinal, 231.
 Deadly Sins, the Seven, 183 *seqq.*
 Decretals, The, 36.
 Delécluse, 116, 130.
 Del Lungo, 98 n, 119, 124 n, 125 n, 131 n, 231 n.
 Devils, in what Circles of the Inferno, 219 n.
 Dino Compagni, 231 n, 236 n, 241 n.
 Dionisi, 129.
 D'Israeli, B., quoted, 215.
Divina Commedia, dedication of editions of, accepted by several Popes, 7.
 — the title when first used, 212 n.
 Döllinger, Dr., 30, 31 n, 120.
Donna Gentil. See '*Gentil Donna*.'
 Dowden, Prof., quoted, 4, 137.
 Dreams, Three of Dante's, in Purgatory, 266.
 Drouilhet, 129 n.
 'Dry land,' raised by stellar influence, 363-365.
 — confined to N. hemisphere, 324, 339, 343, 364, 365, 367.
 — its form semi-lunar, 366.
 'DVX,' prophecy, 7 n.
 'Eclipse of Faith,' quoted, 122 n.
 Edmund, Duke of Lancaster, 289 n.
 Edward I (of England), 293.
 Egbert, Abp., 57 n, 189.
 Elements, spheres of the, 304, 331, 358, 367.
 — properties of, 322.

- Elements**, their mixture the condition of 'generation,' 305, 335, 366.
 — Earth and Fire in contrast, 333.
 — *Quinta Essentia*, 322 n, 339.
Eliot, George, 210 n.
Empire, vacant according to Dante, 32.
Envy, omission of, among Seven Sins, 184, 185, 189.
 — in *Inferno* (f), 163 *seqq.*
 — confessed to by Dante, 59 n.
Ensio, 282, 286, 288 n.
Euphrates and Tigris, source of, 378.
Euripides, quoted, 70 n.

Farinata degli Uberti, 278.
Fazio degli Uberti, 117 n.
Filelfo, 86.
Forese Donati, 54 n, 78 n, 140 n, 224 n.
Foscolo, Ugo, quoted, 8, 306.
Francesca and Paolo, 4 n, 166, 217.
Francis, S., his marriage with Poverty, 3, 91 n.
Franciscans and Dominicans, on *Immaculate Conception*, 64.
Fraser's Magazine, 133 n.
Fraticelli, 125 n, 129, 305.
Frederic I (Emperor). See Barbarossa.
Frederic II (Emperor), 274 n, 275 n, 279, 280-282, 285, 286.
 — his birth, 276 n.
 — his tomb, 278, 291, 301, 302.
 — his conflict with Popes, 21 n, 288.
 — his Saracen troops, 26, 278.
 — the last of the Emperors, 32, 276, 277.
Frederic II (King), 275 n, 282, 286, 287 n, 294, 297-300.
Froude, *History of Council of Trent*, 52 n, 71 n.
 — *Short Studies*, 74 n.
Fuller, *Holy War*, 11 n, 270 n, 276 n, 286 n, 291 n.

Galileo, 340.
Gardner, E., *Dante's Ten Heavens*, 126 n, 129 n.
Gelli, Giambattista, 212 n.
 'Gentil Donna,' 87, 88, 91 n, 105, 134.
Gervase of Tilbury, 17 n.
Gianni Lapo, 117 n, 141.
Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, quoted, 294.
Gietmann, 90 *seqq.*, 150, 151.
Giornale Storico, 83 n, 116, 129 n, 132 n, 139 n, 151, 308 *seqq.*
Giovanna ('*Primavera*'), 93, 99, 100, 117, 135.
Giuliani, 129, 305, 319 n, 329, 332.

Gladstone, Mr., quoted, 30.
Goethe, 3, 136, 147.
Goldsmith, Oliver, on Dante, 2.
Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, 200, 207 n.
Grace, 'Prevenient' and 'Co-operating,' 61, 62.
Gravitas, ambiguous meaning of, 321-323.
Gregory, S., and Trajan, 39, 53 n, 254.
Guelfi, *I Superbi*, 163.
Guerrini and Biocci, 170 n, 309 n.
Guido Cavalcanti, 117, 125, 141.
 — 'il primo amico,' 99.
 — the *V. N.* addressed to him, 103.
Guido Guinicelli, 363.
Guido da Montefeltro, 73, 158, 236.
Guiscard, Robert, 272, 273 n.

Hallam, A. H., quoted, 88.
Harris, W. T., *Spiritual sense of the Divina Commedia*, 165.
Heavens, influence of, 341, 344.
 — God's *organum* in Creation, 334, 344.
Hemispheres, distribution of Land in N. and S., 339, 343, 344.
Henry VI (Emperor), 269, 270, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 285, 286, 300, 302.
Henry VII (Emperor), 32, 241 n, 300.
Henry (eldest son of Emp. Fred. II), 282, 286.
Henry (third son of Emp. Fred. II), 289.
Henry III of England, 289.
Henry VIII of England, 310.
Herbert, George, quoted, 50 n.
Heresy and Heretics, Dante's treatment of, 159, 160, 176-180, 220.
Hettinger, quoted, 7 n, 8 n, 15 n, 51 n.
Homer, quoted by Dante, 82.
Hood, quoted, 181.
Horace, quoted, 378.
Hours of entering Inf., Purg., and Par., 265.
Hugh of S. Victor, 191-193, 204, 206, 259, 263.

Ilario, Fra, Letter of, 299.
Immaculate Conception of B.M.V., 64, 65.
Indulgences, defined, 44 n.
 — abuse of, 45, 52.
Inferno, supposed break between Cantos vii and viii, 168 *seqq.*
Inquisition and Divina Commedia, 7.
'Inspiration' of Roman poets, 23, 24.
Isidore, 185, 187.

- Jacopo della Lana, *Comento*, quoted, 86.
 Jacopone da Todi, 363.
 James, K. of Majorca, 298.
 James II, K. of Aragon and Sicily, 286, 297, 298, 299.
 Jerome, S., 189 n, 334.
 Jerusalem, centre of Earth, 247.
 Juvenal, 378.
- Lamartine, on Dante, 2.
 Lamennais, 25.
 Landino, 7 n.
 Landor, W. S., on Dante, 3, 4 n.
 Latini, Brunetto, 191, 318, 358, 362, 367, 370.
 — — *Trisor*, 15 n, 196, 198, 199, 271 n, 320, 321 n, 322 n, 323 n, 363, 368, 374.
 — — *Tesoretto*, 196–199, 363.
Legenda Aurea, 39 n.
 Lépiciér, 44 n.
 Liddon, Dr., quoted, 64, 259 n.
 Lightfoot, Bp., quoted, 122 n.
 Limbo, nature of punishment in, 37, 38.
 Littledale, Dr., quoted, 30 n.
 Lombard, S. Peter, 47.
 Loria, Roger, 292.
 Louis IX (Saint Louis), 289, 296 n.
 Lowell, J. B., 125 n, 126, 130, 146, 355, 356, 377.
 Lubin, 129.
 Lucan, 24 n, 320, 376 n, 377, 378.
 Lucia, S., 61, 266.
 Lucifer, 378.
 Luke, S., as quoted by Dante, 22 n.
 Luther, 6 n, 7, 10, 44 n, 51, 65 *seqq.*
 Lusio and Renier (joint authors of Article in *Giornale Storico*), 308 n *et seqq.*, 337.
 Lyell, O., quoted, 7 n.
- Macaulay, quoted, 112 n, 245.
 Machiavelli, 2 n, 182 n.
 Mandetta, 99, 135.
 Manfred, 11, 271, 275 n, 278 n, 282, 283–286, 289, 290, 296, 299, 301 n.
 Manning (Cardinal), quoted, 20.
 Marco Lombardo, 278.
 Martin, Sir Theodore, 130.
 Matelda, 86 n, 100, 134.
 'Materia prima', 334, 335.
 Messini, 117 n, 129 n, 219 n.
 Memmi, Simone, 14.
 Mill, J. S., Autobiography, 94.
 Milton, quoted, 15, 48.
 Minich, Prof., 170.
 Minos, in Dante, Virgil, and Plato, 216 n.
- Miracles, Christian, 23.
 — in Roman history, 22.
Monarchia, *De*, placed on the *Index*, 7 n, 17.
 Moncetti, Editor of *Quaestio*, 306 *et seqq.*, 337, 354, 355.
 Mongibello (Etna), 271, 325 n.
 Monreale, Cathedral of, 273 n, 274, 291.
 'Montuositas', 325 n, 365.
 Moon, light and dark parts of, 362.
 Moore, E., *Time-References in Divina Commedia*, 247 n, 252, 263, 265 n.
 — *Dante and his Early Biographers*, 118 n, 131 n, 150, 151, 169 n, 214 n, 309 n, 328 n.
 — *Textual Criticism of the Divina Commedia*, 266, 316 n.
 — *Studies in Dante*, First Series, 82 n, 217 n, 252, 254, 264 n, 266, 321 n, 325, 329 n, 331–333, 339, 342, 350–352, 355 n, 363 n.
 Motley, quoted, 373.
 Mott, *The System of Courtly Love*, 119 n.
- Nannucci, *Manuale*, &c., 363.
 Naples, University of, 277 n.
 Nature, Universal and Particular, 333, 336, 377.
 Newman, Dr., quoted, 58, 59, 227 n.
 Nimrod and Babel, 252, 377.
Nineteenth Century, *The*, 137 n.
 Noah's 'foresight', 366.
 Noëra, 278.
 Norton, Prof. C. E., 103, 115 n, 130, 267.
Novellatori, 119 n.
Novelle, Il Libro di, 370.
 Numbers, importance attached by Dante to, 121 *seqq.*, 267 n.
Nuova Antologia, 98 n.
- Oelsner, Dr. H., 9 n.
 Offices of the Church in *Purgatorio*, 66 n, 259 *seqq.*
 Orosius, on time of birth of Christ, 22.
 — on Geography, 350.
 — on Nimrod, 377.
 Orsini family, 228.
Ottimo Comento, 130.
 Otto IV, 21 n.
 Ottocar, K. of Bohemia, 290 n.
- Palaeologus (Emperor), 288.
 Palermo, capital of Sicily, 272.
 — Martorana Chapel at, 273.
 — Cathedral, 275, 278, 291, 301, 302.
 Papal Election, regulations for, 28, 31 n.
Paradiso, missing Cantos of, 308 n.

- Paur, *Sündenaystem*, &c.**, 162 n, 176.
Peckham, Abp., 70 n, 190.
Perez, 109, 258.
Perrone, 44 n, 45 n, 47.
Peter, S., his outburst in *Par.* xxvii. 30.
Peter III, K. of Aragon and Sicily, 283 n, 287, 290, 295-297.
Petrarch, 7 n, 118 n, 119 n.
 — in relation to *Laura*, 125, 135 *seqq.*, 143, 144.
 — Classical MSS. discovered by, 314.
Philalethes, 161 n, 176.
Philip II (of Spain), 21.
Philip III ('le Hardi', al. 'le Camus') 292.
Philip IV ('le Bel'), 292.
Piccarda Donati, 219 n, 275.
Pier delle Vigne, 221, 280.
Pierre de la Brosse, 280 n.
Piers Plowman, Vision of, 45 n, 66 n, 200.
Pietro di Dante, *Commentary*, 130, 148 n, 150, 151, 161 n, 164 n, 282 n.
Planetary Orbits (or 'Heavens'), contiguous, 339, 367.
Planets, 'inferior' and 'superior,' 373 n.
Plato, on return of Souls to Stars, 24.
 — *Phaedo*, quoted, 374 n, 378.
 — *Gorgias*, quoted, 216 n.
Plumptre, E. H., quoted, 97 n, 126 n.
Poets, lists of greatest, 377.
Poggio, MSS. discovered by, 315.
Poletto, 116.
Polo da Reggio, 363.
POPES referred to :
 — **Adrian I**, 17.
 — **Adrian IV**, 15.
 — **Adrian V** in Purgatory, 28; elected as layman (?), 28.
 — **Alexander III**, 15, 274 n.
 — **Alexander IV**, 288.
 — **Alexander VI**, 69.
 — **Anacletus (Anti-Pope)**, 273.
 — **Anastasius II**, 25, 155, 177.
 — **Benedict VIII**, 273.
 — **Benedict IX**, Pope *act.* 12, 25.
 — **Benedict XI**, 99, 231.
 — **Boniface VIII**, 14, 15, 27, 30, 31 n, 73, 74, 99, 200, 219 n, 227, 287 n, 297, 298.
 — — Indulgence for the Jubilee, 67.
 — — at Anagni, 29, 31 n.
 — **Celestine V ('*gran rifiuto*')**, 27, 30, 31 n, 99, 193 n, 200.
 — — his abdication invalid, 30, 31.
 — **Clement IV**, 11, 28, 284, 289.
 — **Clement V**, 27, 28 n, 100, 227, 300.
 — **Clement VII**, 74 n.
POPES referred to—*cont.*
 — **Clement XII**, 7.
 — **Eugenius III**, 13 n, 193 n.
 — **Gregory I (the Great)**, 187, 202, 203, 204, 254, 259.
 — **Gregory VI**, 26 n.
 — **Gregory VII (Hildebrand)**, 15, 273.
 — **Gregory IX**, 15, 18 n, 21 n, 64 n, 279, 288 n.
 — **Gregory X**, 283.
 — **Honorius II**, 274 n.
 — **Innocent II**, 273.
 — **Innocent III**, 14, 15, 21 n, 47, 71 n, 274 n.
 — **Innocent IV**, 15, 289 n.
 — **Innocent VIII**, 74.
 — **John X**, 25.
 — **John XI**, 25.
 — **John XII**, 25.
 — **John XIX**, elected as layman, 28 n.
 — **John XXI ('Pietro Hispano')**, 29.
 — — the only Portuguese Pope, 29 n.
 — **John XXII**, 28 n, 64 n, 69.
 — **Leo III**, 17.
 — **Leo X**, 26 n, 71.
 — **Lucius II**, killed in battle, 26 n.
 — **Martin IV**, 28, 289.
 — **Martin V**, 31 n.
 — **Nicholas II**, 31 n, 272.
 — **Nicholas III**, 27, 227 *seqq.*, 239 n, 287-289.
 — **Nicholas IV**, 293, 297.
 — **Paul III**, 7.
 — **Paul IV**, 26.
 — **Pius IV**, 7.
 — **Pius V**, 27, 201.
 — **Pius VII**, 7.
 — **Pius IX**, 8, 20.
 — **Sergius III**, 25.
 — **Sixtus IV**, 64 n.
 — **Urban II**, 273.
 — **Urban IV**, 289.
 — **Urban VIII**, 261.
 — **Victor IV (Anti-Pope)**, 274 n.
Portinari, Folco, 98, 141.
Pride, sometimes outside sevenfold Classification of Sins, 185, 187.
 — Cause of Man's Fall, 268.
 — treatment of, in *Inferno*, 163 *seqq.*
Primum Mobile, 340, 344, 361.
Proci da, Giovanni da, 288.
 — 'Prophecies' in *Divina Commedia*, 28 n, 171.
Puocianti, 129, 132 n.
Purgatory, formation of Mountain of, 246, 247.
 — three Steps of its Gate, 47, 248.
 — six points of symmetry in *Cornici* of, 249 *seqq.*
 — Stairways connecting *Cornici*, 268.

- Quaestio de Aqua et Terra*, 267, 303 *seqq.*
 — Quotations in, analyzed, 349–353.
Quarterly Review, 61 n, 100 n, 109–115, 130.
- Ramsay, Professor W. M., 314.
 Rashdall, *Universities*, &c., 70 n, 190 n.
 Raymond Berenger, 287 n, 296.
 Reeve, H., *Petrarch*, 136 n.
 Renier, Professor R., 82, 83, 116, 117 n, 121, 125 n, 129 n, 132, 139 n, 151, 306. (See also *s. v.* Luzio.)
 Rhipheus, salvation of, 40, 254 n.
 Richard, Duke of Cornwall, 289 n.
 Richard of B. Victor, 63 n, 75 n, 193.
 Ristoro d'Aresso, 318, 323 n, 325 n, 338 n, 340 n, 353, 354, 358–373.
 Robert (K. of Naples), 293.
 Rocca, Professor, 151.
 Roger, 'The Great Count,' 272–274.
 Roger, King of Sicily, 269, 273, 274, 285, 291, 301, 302.
 Roman history, 'sacred history' for Dante, 21, 22.
 Ross, Mrs., *The Land of Manfred*, 277 n, 301 n.
 Rossetti, D. G., 2 n, 101, 117 n, 126 n, 127, 130, 140 n.
 Rossetti, Gabriele, 88 *seqq.*
 — *Comento Analitico*, 88 n, 89 n, 231 *seqq.*
 — *Spirito Antipapale*, 88 n, 89 n, 92 n, 101 n.
 — *La Beatrice di Dante*, 90 n, 101.
 Rudolph (Emperor), 277, 287 n, 290 n.
 Ruskin, 20, 49, 144 n, 242, 244, 250.
- Sacrobosco, Joannes de, 318, 323 n, 339 n, 359 n, 367, 370, 374.
 Sainte-Beuve, quoted, 3 n.
 'Saligia,' 202, 203.
 'Salse' at Bologna, 225.
 Saracens in Sicily, 272, 273.
 Sardinian provincialism, 227.
 Sarum Prymer, 191.
 Savonarola, compared with Dante and Luther, 65 *seqq.*
 Scartazzini, on Beatrice, 82, 107 *seqq.*
 — quoted, 97 n, 100, 101, 139 n, 143 *seqq.*, 222 n, 228 n, 229 n, 279, 306, 318, 363.
 Soherer, E., 3 n.
 Soherillo, 94 n, 101 n, 142 n, 164, 176 n.
- Schmidt, Dr., on *Quaestio*, 306, 353 n, 374.
 Scot, Michael, 277 n.
 'Scriptura' (and 'Scrittura') in Dante, 24.
 'Seal and Wax' metaphor in Dante, 359.
 Seeley, Prof. J. B., quoted, 26.
 Seneca, 378.
 Serravalle, Commentary quoted, 274.
 Sewell, T., quoted, 9 n.
 Shadwell, Dr. C. L., 303, 312, 313 n, 314, 325 n, 348.
 Shakespeare, quoted, 74, 244, 281.
 Shelley, quoted, 102.
 — *Epipsychidion*, 137.
 Sicilian Vespers, 285, 287, 296.
 Sidrach, *Il Libro di*, 370.
 Siena, 'Campo' di, 290.
 Sophocles, quoted, 241, 286.
 Springs, causes of, 354, 365 n, 369.
 Statius, salvation of, 38, 254 n.
 — nine centuries in Purgatory, 49.
 — *Silvae*, 315.
 Stoppani, 305, 318 *seqq.*
Summae Deus clementiae, 257, 260, 261.
 Swedenborg, 9.
 Swords, 'The two Swords,' 18 n.
 Symonds, J. A., 118 n, 119 n, 130, 244, 302.
- Tacitus, quoted, 277 n, 280 n, 283 n.
 Tagliacozzo, battle of, 283, 290.
 Tancred, 275.
 Tartarini, quoted, 82 n, 96 n, 97 n, 107 n.
 Tennyson, 3 n, 49, 115, 125, 243, 377.
 Theodore, Abp., 57 n, 188.
 Theodulf, Abp., 190.
 Tides, Theories of, 319.
 Tithes are 'pauperum Dri,' 17.
 Todeschini, 167, 176.
 Toynbee, Mr. Paget, 268, 315 n, 320 n, 325 n, 352 n, 362, 367 n, 369, 376 n, 378.
 Trajan, salvation of, 39, 53 n, 254.
 Trent, Council of, 17, 47, 66 n, 201.
 Tristitia. See *s. v.* Accidia.
Trivium and *Quadrivium*, 361.
 θριώτης, 160 *seqq.*
- Uguccione da Pisa, 352 n, 378.
 Ulysses, 246, 291 n.
 U.O.M., initial letters in *Purg.* xii, 268.
 Usurers, in Dante's classification, 181, 223.
 Ussah, 66.
 'ὕβρις,' 213 *seqq.*

- Vellutello, quoted, 7 n.
 'Vigliacchi,' in *Inf.* iii., 215, 377.
 Vigo, *Dante e la Sicilia*, 271.
 Villani, Giovanni, 231, 232 n, 277, 287, 290, 293, 378.
 Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Naturale*, 320 n, 322 n.
 Virgil, quoted, 175 n.
 — treated by Dante like Scripture, 23, 24.
 — fourth Eclogue, 39.
 — symbolism of, in *Divina Commedia*, 61.
 Virgin, *The Blessed*, 61-65, 249, 359.
Vita Nuova, date of composition, 100-103.
 — elaborate structure of, 103, 115 n, 267.
 Voigt, Dr., quoted, 315 n.
 Voltaire, on Dante, 2, 4 n.
 — on Shakspeare, 2.
 'Vostro' and 'voi,' use of, by Dante, 29.
 Walpole, H., on Dante, 3.
 Warton (Professor of Poetry) on Dante, 4.
 Wenceslaus, 'Good King,' 296 n.
 Whately, Abp., quoted, 242 n.
 Wickham, Dean, quoted, 253.
 Wicksteed, Rev. P. H., quoted, 377.
 William 'the Bad,' 274, 276.
 William 'the Good,' 273 n, 274, 275, 294.
 Wisdom, Book of, 109.
 Wiseman (Cardinal), quoted, 31 n.
 Witte, 88 n, 97, 130 n, 139 n, 165, 166, 173, 176.
 Wolsey, Fall of, 281.
 Wordsworth, 42, 77, 105 n, 119, 132, 147 n, 213, 218.
 Wright, *Political Songs*, 46 n, 203 n.
 Zanche, Michel, 282 n.
 Zodiac, effects of inclination of, 360.

THE END.

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